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JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND AESTHETICS

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The Present Volume felicitates the 85th Birth Day of

Professor Sushil K. Saxena

A Founder Member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics* and an Authority on the Neo-Kantian Aesthetics of Hindustani Music and Kathak Dance

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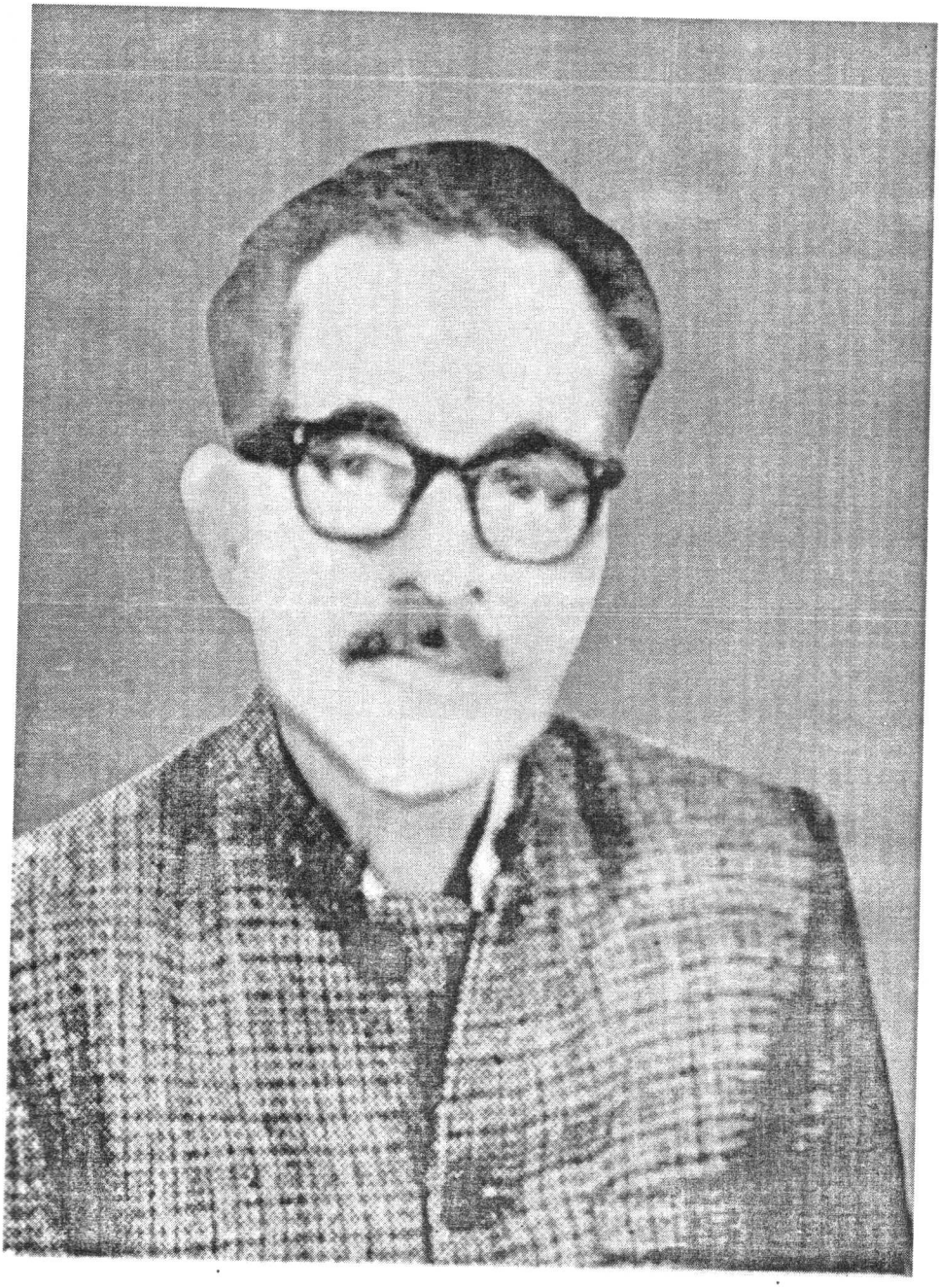

The Art of Konark and The Notion of Representation

JANE DURAN

The commentary of Arrell, Langer, Kramrisch and Heinrich Zimmer is alluded to in an attempt to come to grips with the notion of representation in Hindu stone reliefs, such as those of the temple at Konark in the state of Orissa. It is argued that the reliefs depict or represent sexual acts is misguided and constitutes a fundamental misunderstanding not only of Hindu culture in general, but of the notion of representation in an aesthetic context.

In the thirteenth century master builders in what is today the Indian state of Orissa constructed an edifice known to Westerners as the "Temple of the Sun" at the site of Konark.[1] More so than perhaps most temple sites in India, the work at Konark became celebrated early on for what have long been regarded as its "erotic" carvings. Much of the exterior of the temple site, particularly in its most visible portions, is covered with rockwork of couples in various poses, many of them positions of sexual intercourse.

Although almost all of the art of South Asia may be said to be opaque to those from other traditions, since it is clear that much of the work rests on mythological and other factors within the culture, carvings such as those at Konark may present a particular difficulty, especially if seen in the sorts of art historical terms that have commonly been used to describe Indian works in the past.[2] It is too easy simply to assert that the outside carvings at the Temple of the Sun do not depict sexual acts, since their "meaning" is metaphorical. They do, in fact, depict such acts—at least on one level—and this is one reason that the British and other early visitors were so struck by the temple. As Benjamin Rowland notes, the temple was designated by the British the "Black Pagoda:"

> Returning to the subject of the sculpture, we must be aware of the fact that the Black Pagoda has achieved a great deal of notoriety through the frankly obscene nature of most of the carving.... This carving might be described as a literal illustration of the erotic recipes of the Kama Sutra.... This endless round of dalliance is a kind of sculptural apotheosis of the relations between men and women.[3]

It would be facile to say simply that the depiction of sexual acts at Konark is one that has its utmost importance mythologically, or from some religious standpoint. Although it is clear from most of what we know about the Hindu tradition that this is the case, it is also obvious that, in the way in which the word "depicts" is ordinarily used, the carving does

indeed depict human beings engaged in sexual acts, or the various poses would not have been found so shocking.

Perhaps one of the most helpful ways in which we can address the issues involved in Konark (and other sites like it, such as some of the temple work at Khajuraho) is to admit from the outset that at least two sorts of things are going on simultaneously: one is, in the way Eurocentrically-trained art historians normally employ the term, "depiction," and the other is—at least insofar as religious studies scholars are concerned—the creation of a series of statements about the importance of sexuality a an aspect of worship. But to attempt to make this sort of clarification also begs the question. If a site is from the outset labeled religious, or a place of worship, and if the scenes carved on it are never intended by the carver/sculptor to represent actual human being, can we then say that depiction is involved? This question, with all its difficulty, is similar to the art/craft distinction that has traditionally dogged attempts at dealing with, for example, work from Western Africa. It is admitted from the outset that much of what might be found in, for example, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York under the label "African" was never intended as art in the Western sense, because the vast majority of objects had a utilitarian purpose within their cultures. Does this then mean that we cannot label them "art?" All of these issues are related, and require further elucidation.

I

The mythological importance of stonework such as that at Konark has been the subject of extensive commentary in the work of scholars on India and South Asia in general. Perhaps chief among the scholars whose work is cited in this regard is Heinrich Zimmer, at least insofar as his writings appear in popular translation by Joseph Campbell. In a section of *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization* titled "Shiva-Shakti," Zimmer comments on the importance of the erotic duo as commonly found at sites in India:

> There are many ways of representing the differentiation of the Absolute into antagonistic yet co-operative pairs of opposites. Among the oldest and most usual of these is that based on the duality of the sexes.... A splendid example of the God and Goddess in erotic play appears in a Bengalese relief representing Shiva with his consort.... For the sake of the universe and its creatures, the Absolute has apparently unfolded into this duality....[4]

This sort of commentary leaves the reader with the sensation that it would be a mistake to attribute anything like Western representation too much of the relief-work to be found on temples and at temple sites. After all, it can be argued, if the best interpretation of the erotic play is that it is a manifestation of the unfolding of the Absolute, how can a more standard notion of representation and/or depiction, as normally used in European art circles, be employed?

One take on the notion of representation by a philosopher attempting to deal with similar issues is to be found in Douglas Arrell's "What Goodman Should Have Said About Representation."[5] Although Arrell's main purpose here is to construct an argument against views propounded by Goodman in his *Languages of Art*, much of what Arrell has to say is

relevant to the set of aesthetic conundra we are examining here. Arrell is against what he terms Goodman's "denotative" concept of representation, and, to be fair, he also claims that it is inconsistent with a great deal of the rest of the work Goodman develops. More importantly, he argues that representation does indeed depend on some perceived similarity or resemblance (it does not make sense to think that it is purely arbitrary, or purely denotative), but similarity and resemblance, according to Arrell, are the products of context. Thus Arrell writes:

> Whether or not a symbol represents an object depends upon whether it is perceived in a context in which the properties shared by symbol and referent are noticed or not.... If representation depends upon our noticing the properties shared between symbol and referent, representation still depends upon the prior sharing of those properties, and is not purely arbitrary.[6]

Now we have a tool that might be of some use in discussing the stonework of Konark. Europeans lack the cultural context of the Shiva-shakti devotion, and are unlikely (without previous acquaintance or training) to be able to make any inferences with respect to representation and tantric worship. This, of course, would have been even more true of the original British visits to the site in the late 18th and early 19th centuries than it is today. Many Hindus, however, are more likely—especially those with greater Vedic training—to interpret what has been termed the eroticism of the statuary in highly nonerotic terms. In both cases, the context for interpretation and for the belief in shared similarities is provided by the previous learning and acquaintance of the individual, and is more or less independent of whatever went on at the time the stonework was created. It is this sort of argument that Arrell tries to reinforce when he cites Goodman, at another point, as having said that with respect to "...baggage at an airport check-in station [...] the spectator may notice shape, size, color...the passenger [...] destination and worship."[7]

Here we go some way toward elucidating the puzzle of the "depictions" at Konark. But we are still left with at least a couple of conceptual questions: Is there such a thing as acultural, or acontextual representation? And, if so, what might that be?

II

If one were to try to make the case that some representations would hold across context, and across cultures, several other troublesome notions intrude themselves. When social scientists strive to articulate universals—or something approaching universals—of the human experience, they often reach for those experiences that, because they are biologically part of human existence, can be found in every human culture. Every human culture, without exception, will have at least some minimal ceremonies surrounding death, for example, or childbirth. Thus we can hypothesize that representations that might be the most recognizable, for lack of a better term, across cultures and contexts would be representations that were most universal in content, and, perhaps more importantly, more naturalistic in style—that is, the style of the representation must be such that it would readily be recognizable to almost any adult, developmentally-able human.

There are, of course, few such representations. And what would count as "natuaralistic" here also begs the question, although it is perhaps no more question-begging (and, indeed, even less so) than some other constructs we have examined. But the reliefs at Konark again are problematic on this score, and although this sort of conceptualization may be of some help, it runs up against a set of limits very quickly. As mentioned at an earlier point, it is agreed by all and sundry that the reliefs do portray or depict sexual intercourse in a natuaralized way—it is precisely because they are recognizable on this score that British visitors, far removed culturally from the context of the original relief-work, were readily able to grasp the images. But the mere fact that images or representations might be recognizable cross-culturally or acontextually does not mean that, on a finer-tuned philosophical analysis (such as that employed by Arrell) their "depictions" or "representations" are reducible to that contextual element. This is the core of the matter.

III

In her work on symbolism, now perhaps not as frequently cited as it ought to be, Susanne Langer has brought to bear a number of concepts that may be useful to us. In short, even if we are dealing with sense-impressions and sense images—such as we might hypothesize a viewer would be able to take away from Konark immediately, and later again upon reflection—we are not necessarily dealing with material that fails to be susceptible to more than one interpretation. This is because, as Langer writes, "...even the subjective record of sense experience... is not a direct copy of actual experience."[8] More to the point, and with slightly more argument, Langer says:

> In short, images have all the characteristics of symbols. If they were weak sense-experiences, they would confuse the order of nature for us. Our salvation lies in that we do not normally take them for bona fide sensations, but attend to them only in their capacity of *meaning* things, being *images* of things—symbols whereby those things are conceived....[9]

Here we have the apparatus that, combined with our previous analysis, may allow us to achieve some work. If images themselves are already subject to a level of interpretation, which is Langer's main point, then the contextual tradition in which the images occur (something emphasized by Arrell) is all-important in unpacking them. Thus the shakti tradition is of overwhelming importance in the examination of the carvings at Konark, even if it is not immediately apparent. The carvings could not have been made without the tradition—there would have been no motivation to create them. So although the nineteenth century British viewer may have been shocked at what he or she took to be the free depiction of the erotic, presumably even such a visitor, fresh from the West, would have understood on some level that the carvings had "another" meaning. (This is especially the case since it would have been evident to anyone that a temple constitutes a religious site.) *A fortiori* then, for the Hindu viewer, who already understands the tradition and can readily bring it to bear on the viewing of the carvings. In a sense, we have the resolution of our puzzle with respect to the representation or depiction of the carvings: it can have, primarily,

no other interpretation than a religious one, and one that is couched in the larger Sanskrit-derived metaphysical tradition from which it springs. Other stands on what the carvings represent are of secondary or tertiary interest because they fail to speak to the original motivations of the craftsmen or to the background in which the craftsmen worked.

Just how potent that tradition is comes to mind when we read works such as Stella Kramrisch's *The Presence of Shiva*, a monumental compendium of Shaivite myth and interpretation.[10] Part of the difficulty with the notion of myth is that to the Western mind it tends to conjure up specifics: an actual tale, a recounting, a set of images associated with a story. But the Shaivite presence in Hindu culture is so enormous that it cannot, readily, be divorced from the entirety of the culture. Because of this, it forms a backdrop—or even a medium—against which or in which the culture finds itself, and without which the culture does not cohere. Thus the Indian viewer of the stone reliefs sees not only an image of the shakti fusion, but perhaps something more. Some of Kramrisch's commentary provides for us the flavor of what transpires:

> Throughout his two marriages, to Sati and to Parvati, Siva the Lord of Yoga did not engender a child in the womb of the great Goddess. Though his frightful potency on one occasion persisted in the lap of Parvati for a thousand years of the gods, and made him oblivious of the world and his obligation to it, he remained self-contained and did not shed his seed.... Siva and Parvati have been celebrated in art and poetry, forming as they do the most accessible aspect of the Great God, which he offered in his play.... Both aspects, the ascetic and the erotic, were united....[11]

What we have here, clearly, is no mere myth but, as was stated earlier, a worldview, and one that, properly articulated, sees the divine erotic as an aspect of yoga and of the eternal. Viewed in this light, the contention that the Hindu viewer has a response to the reliefs at Konark that is completely different from the response of the European visitor is an understatement.

IV

Our analysis of the representational content of the work at Konark is, as has been said, not unrelated to a number of other problems that occur in the examination of art criticism of non-European cultures. But sites such as Konark are especially fruitful sources for discussion and debate, since the large body of commentary on them and their worldwide renown help us to focus on what precisely drives much of the content of aesthetic and art historical commentary on the cultures of Asia, Africa and in some instances Latin America.

These problems would not be as worthy of examination as they are were it not for the fact, obvious from what we have said here, that the voices of authority in art history, particularly as it appears in an academic or university setting, are overwhelmingly Eurocentric, and more crucially, reflect the employment of European categorizations.[12] Thus the student is immediately under the way of a set of views that may be not only at variance with, but antithetical to the very spirit of the cultures in question. Although there is no paucity of commentary on Hinduism and the Hindu worldview in general, much of

that commentary is poorly reflected in some of the major art historical sources commonly used for criticism, such the work of Benjamin Rowland.

The naïve, uneducated Westerner may well be puzzled by what she or he takes as exemplars of Hinduism, such as figures of Ganesh, and multi-armed deities. But however we may be tempted to ridicule the naïve viewer, who is puzzled by what appears to be, in the case of Ganesh, the worship of an elephant, not far removed from this sort of simplistic view is one that asks us to take other depictions at face value, but in an art historical or aesthetic sense that is derived almost entirely from the type of conceptual apparatus used to describe, for example, work of Renaissance. When we think of artists whose work might be deemed to be mannerist, we think of Parmigianino and some of his contemporaries. To attempt to apply this label to work Hindu artists and craftsmen, from virtually any period, is to err in a profound way.

British viewers were shocked by what they took to be the eroticism of Konark, but in most of the more sophisticated uses that we have for terms such as "representation" and "depiction," the works are not about sex or sexual gratification. Filling in the blanks on what it is that the works are about, as we say colloquially, gives us refreshing pause in our examination of the works of Asian cultures.

Notes and References

[1] One of the best available descriptions readily available to Westerners of this temple and its importance to the art tradition of India is to be found in Benjamin Rowland's *The Art and Architecture of India*, Baltimore, MD: Penguin, 1967.

[2] In a recent piece I have attempted to address questions surrounding the relevance of Eurocentric art commentary to the art of India *(Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Winter 2001).

[3] Rowland, *op.cit.*, p. 174.

[4] Zimmer, Heinrich, *Myths and Symbols of Indian Art and Civilization,* New York: Pantheon Books, 1963, p. 137.

[5] Arrell Douglas, "What Goodman Should Have Said About Representation," *in Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* Vol. XLVI, No. 1, Fall 1987, pp. 41-49.

[6] Arrell, "What Goodman," in *op. cit.*, pp.42-43.

[7] Arrell is quoting another work of Goodman's that he takes to be a better explanation of Goodman's overall position, *Problems and Projects.*

[8] Sussane K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 144.

[9] Langer, in *New Key,* pp. 144-45.

[10] Stella Kramrisch, *The Presence of Siva,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

[11] Kramrisch, *Siva*, pp. 431-32.

[12] An examination of a similar problem is found in "Mannerism and Naturalism in Hindu Miniatures," in *Journal of Aesthetic Education,* Winter 2001.

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Recycling and Reviewing Relationships in David Williams' *The Burning Wood*: An Eco-feminist Perspective

ROOP KUMAR BALASINGH

One of the topical findings that H.G. Wells had dealt with, a century ago, in his *The Time Machine* (1895), presents the argument that too much comfort and affluence and an uncaring selfish heart that has no concern for the other leads to indolence and retardation of human progress to the point of self-annihilation. Wells' science fiction may become prophetic in modern times from the unmitigated steps of destruction of the planet's life system by the so-called "rational" mankind, but truly, a savage of civilization. The ending of his time-travel evokes a sense of dismay, trepidation and horror over what our future generations are going to have to live with, if each one of us is not watchful and worthy today:

> The darkness grew apace; a cold wind began to blow in freshening gusts from the east, ... Beyond these lifeless sounds the world was silent. Silent? It would be hard to convey the stillness of it. All the sounds of man, the bleating sheep, the cries of birds, the hum of insects, *the stir that makes the background of our lives*—all that was over... I saw the black central shadow of the eclipse sweeping towards, me ... *The horror of this great darkness came on me (emphasis mine)* (Wells 86).

The sinister and grim picture of a lifeless and "natureless" future, making one ruminate deeply on the need for eco-preservation, gains greater value as the recent publishers of Wells' book convey the ominous fact that "this book has been printed on re-cycled ecological friendly paper. What Wells attributes to evolutionary social disenchantment can be extended to the planetary world of margins and exploitation of the "other;" the dangers of corrupting the earth and its environment is no different from that extended to man and his human relationships that threatens to darken the earth's civilization with the threatening power of self-generated evil.

Darkness is an archetypal force, an intimidating and "phenomenally" destabilizing spiritual phenomena that gives greater meaning to light. Darkness, paradoxically "illuminates" our limitations, which we fail to see, refuse to recognize or even worse, ignore to be instructed upon in the light of day. The patriarchal providential power of creation had once said, "Let there be light;" hence darkness, metaphoric or literal, could never have

been an agent of progress. But God, no doubt an "authority" on progress by paradox, in placing the "untouchable" amidst the "touchables" in the "paradise of Eden" never wanted man to be self-complacent. Eden, like Xanadu, was inevitably, a place of margins like the "promised land" of Canada to immigrants across the oceans. As evinced by Canadian literary historians like W.H. New and R.F. Klinck, the land of Canada is a mosaic of 'wanton' wilderness, climatic extremes, painful paradoxes and an assortment of ambivalences. The Canadian's view of nature, both human and elemental, is rather different from that across the Atlantic. As implied by Margaret Atwood in her *Survival* (1972), caught in the web of an unfriendly nature the average Canadian mind refuses to see Nature as benevolent and God as a protector, even as it wantonly wishes to perceive both as "tricksters."

Though feminism has been a considerably popular and much-discussed topic on the literary agenda of all nations, the term "eco-feminism" has so far been assumed to be an exotic, and peculiarly unrelatable area of literary interest (and sometimes an unpalatable nonliterary topic to some) of recent origin and rare insight. The birth of eco-criticism finds its roots in the birth of environmental literary studies, as mentioned by Cherryll Glotfelty in her editorial introduction to the anthology *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), in the mid-eighties through Frederick O. Waage's editorial collection of essays entitled *Teaching Environmental Literature: Materials, Methods, Resources* (1985), based on Barry Commoner's first law of ecology that "everything is connected to everything else." Glotfelty goes on to emphasize that "various sub-fields like environmental ethics, deep ecology, eco-feminism and social ecology have emerged in an effort to understand and critique the root cause of environmental degradation and to formulate an alternative view of existence that will provide an ethical and conceptual foundation for right relations with the earth" (xxi).

Janis Birkeland, in her essay "Ecofeminism: Linking Theory and Practice," appearing in the anthology *Ecofeminism, Women, Animals, Nature* (1993) edited by Greta Gaad, discovers eco-feminism to be "feminism taken to its logical conclusion, because it theorizes the inter-relations among self, societies and nature" (17/18). She defines eco-feminism as "a value system, a social movement, and a practice, but it also offers a *political analysis* that explores the links between androcentricism and environmental destruction.... [it begins with]... the realization of the exploitation of nature and intimately linked to Western Man's attitude toward women and tribal cultures" (18). David Williams' *The Burning Wood* (1975) is a novel of such conflicts between Man, Matter and Spirit; between Fundamentalist Puritanism in the form of Grandpa Cardiff and the vitriolic Auntie Bee, and the profane and marginalized nature's sons of the soil, the Cree Indians, forced to ape and adopt a white way of life. William's novel pleads for the need for trust, acceptance and accommodative interrelations with the other in a world of inevitable interdependence and multiplicities and relative truths. The central idea is "caring for the other is caring for self; a notion that lends religious connotations to human coexistence with his environment both physical and spiritual."

Eco-feminism, a term that Williams was probably unaware when he wrote *The Burning Wood*, is an area of recent inter-related literary study gaining currency in the modern globalized world of wastes and wantonness and is greatly concerned with the exposition of the mindless misuse and heartless exploitation of the earth's human and biological resources. It demands dignity and discretion in the treatment of Nature, with which the very existence of mankind is intimately bound. The feministic tag to the topic is more to remind one of the domination, marginalization and the power of politics of dispossession encountered in the gender biased human order, and extended to the natural order, where the earth is envisioned as "woman," the female creative principle, the womb, and very motherhood. Susan Griffin in *Ecofeminism and Meaning* emphasizes the fact that "women are not biologically or metaphysically *closer to nature* (emph. mine)" (Warren 213) not equal to nature but "essentially" the productive part of nature even as man should have been its providing part. Ecofeminism in general "begins with the fact of natural existence ... [aiming] towards nature as a reality . . . that the social construction (exploitation, destruction) of nature is implicit in and inseparable from the social construction of gender points out how uncaring man plays the dominant and destructive role of the patriarchal power of domination and exploitation of the 'other' in a world of interdependent relationships. Eco-feminism is therefore the voice of a combined human and non-human minority protesting against the abuse of the essence of life in the painful relationship between man and his environment. It stresses more on the ways and means of stabilizing and sustaining the earth's fast depleting life resources. Care should be taken against any affective fallacy that should mislead the literary critic to look on eco-feminism as directly and merely related to gender studies. Therefore in the study of eco-feminism care should be taken not to background the challenges of the earth at the cost of a fore-grounded merely feministic façade that flouts and fights against all dominating and threatening sources of authority. Derrida's brilliant insight that neither meaning nor definition can reside in one word alone, that "sense of the word relies on other words, all containing histories, traces of a self-containing, self-sustaining system resembles the idea of an ecosystem" (Warren 216). The worldview of Williams, and his pluralistic world of interdependent and connected multiplicities, is no different.

Authority in the name of the patriarchal usurpation of leadership and power has been a recurrent motif in Canadian fictions. For example, Gabrielle Roi's *The Road Past* Altamont Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel*, Ethel Wilson's *Swamp Angel*, Hugh Garner's *The Silence on the Shore* Hugh MacLennon's *Each Man's Son*, James Reaney's play *Colours in the Dark* and David Williams's *The Burning Wood* and *Eye of the Father* are a few among many. Many such writings speak of the exercise of power within and across gender and culture, and their monopolizing and marginalizing impact in human relationships both personal and public.

Of these, David Williams is a writer with a difference. His primary concern is in establishing the paradox of life especially the Canadian prairie life, on a national and global

canvas. Concerned with history and the evolution of hierarchy in mankind, and the need for racial and religious accommodation, he is a radical writer of a socio-religious fiction that demands the need for living and letting others live through self-scrutiny, moderation, and acceptance of the other. The feminist's perspective is one of the many ways in which his novels may be studied. Margaret Clarke in her article "Realizing the Feminine Self," speaks of how David Williams's books "work at defining masculinity, not in heroic or antiheroic terms but in terms of its place in a more integrated world view, a more feminine world view" (88).

The whole earth and all creation on it glorifies some known or unknown authority whom some call God the Creator while a few want to associate it to the marvel of evolutionary science. But whatever be the salutatory outcome of creation or evolution, the fact remains that integration or wholeness is a divine reality and not just some religious or utopian dream; that sin is not in "worldly" people failing to be "spiritual" but springs from all that denies, damages or divides wholeness. Therefore anything that disturbs natural equilibrium or the creative cycle can be treated as a negative, destructive and deplorable force, be it the relationship between homosapiens of the same or different gender, or theirs, in turn with nature.

In recent global negotiations, the agents of authority and power (patriarchal prescriptionists, if they may be called so) have moved from economic to environmental issues, for they now foresee that all the wealth and power that one can amass will be of no use if there is no 'life' to live it by. Thanks to the proliferation of weapons of war and industrial toxic effluents, the people of the world have always been kept under a suspended death sentence. Careless or uncaring handling of scientific wisdom, as well as its unconcerned imposition will make most rivers on the earth toxic like that of the Thames, the Rhine and Poe, and leave most lands like Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The greater and implicit need for environmental awareness has risen since the last century due to the interplay of various factors. It has been found by Marc Williams that there is a dialectical interplay between poverty and environmental degradation. Water and air pollutions, deforestration and soil erosion, and the build up of hazardous wastes threaten ecological development. The most decisive factor, in the evolution of a concern on environmental issues, has been the role played by Green Movements like the Green Peace and Chipko, which have ensured international coverage, on the interdependence of environmental and social issues. The Bhopal gas tragedy, the Chernobyl leak, the oil spills and the Red Sea and the depletion of the Great Barrier Reef, all contributed to a growing fear, and subsequent awareness, of the fragility of our eco-system and its greater impart on human life and welfare. The discovery, in 1985, of huge holes in the ozone layer above the Antarctica, and warnings from scientists about the dangers of global warning, are no more met with scepticism, for mankind has experienced the effects of El Nino and La Nina in flash floods and furious forest fires. The need to respect and protect planetary life has risen even as the need to respect and recognise the role of women in a male world has been recognised, through the movement of feminism, in recent times.

Feminism, like Romanticism, has resisted definition and has come to mean differently to different people who wish to make the best of their own cause. Feminism is a movement that sprung from the fear and anger of being left out, let down and belittled. It saw women as a minoritized, misused and misrepresented gender, socio-politically "corralled" in metaphoric socio-religious ghettoes, decrowned and disfranchised. In a world of misguided preferences and prejudice, dominators are thought to be a higher order of being than the dominated, just as Grandpa Cardiff's views of the Indian. It takes Joshua's kind to realize that endangered earth means endangered Indians and by extension endangered humanity. Over simplification of the feminine diversity may result only in creating another myth of woman/man. If physiology is the clinical mapping of the body, then ecology is the scientific mapping of the earth and the patterns of nature and their relevance to the peoples of the earth; each to the other. Eco-literatures and eco-criticism therefore become necessary scientific studies of the eco-system in relation to man and his role in the conservation such that all life may continue to exist in interdependent harmony.

Between these two complementary fields of study we find that, in the past years, feminism has flourished relatively well and the rightful place of women in society steadily reinstated. On the Contrary, our eco-system has slowly and steadily deteriorated from depletion to dilapidation to disenchantment. The amount of care and concern nourished on the status of women on earth has not been equally, if not more, directed to the sustainer of their voices of protest—Nature. It is even lamentable that a percentage of women, all over the world indirectly or directly help in the marketing of wild-life product like ivory, tiger tissues, perfumes from the musk of oxen deer or bear, consumption of dolphin and whale meat, furs of mink and fox. They are the cosmetic fashion "Bees" that Williams witnesses for us.

Each of the chapters of *The Burning Wood* caters to major elemental images like fire, wind, water, sky and earth and each of the women in Joshua's self-realization enacts an elemental trait. David Williams speaks through his protagonist, Joshua Cardiff, who feels victimized and set a side by his own for being different. Joshua is "conditioned" by the environment around him, especially the "native" earth more than the white education, and the women, more than by the men, who think he ought to have traced and shaped his life to each of their expectations. The fiery Auntie Bee, burns him with her vitriolic words which become the destructive force that metaphorically marginalize him from his homely paradise, while the earth-like Helga, his mother, believes in being a true child of Christ, and hence patient and forbearing in line with her Christian faith, "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Williams 4). His grandmother, who could have done something for him, is like the sky; she is all pervading but, like the cosmic forces, pleads selective amnesia when he seeks her help to prove his innocence when accused of stealing Grandpa's "humbugs." His first blind date Leah Kajicek is like water and teaches him to be the universal solvent with its magnificent powers of sustaining life; she educates him to be spiritual and "gentlemanly," while all the time his mind is pre-occupied with the various strategies to adopt in seducing

her. The next, Mrs. Robinson the camp-cook, is the human component of these elemental influences and educates him on peace-making and plain existential humanism. The last, Lulu the Cree sister of his Indian friend Thomas Singletree, as against the sustaining purity of the motherly earth, is the wild wind across a tarnished earth in need of redemption as much as it redeems those who rely on it, capable of annihilation as much as capable of sustaining life. Thus, in the "making of Joshua," Williams is not working at defining masculinity in heroic or anti-heroic terms but in terms of its place in a more integrated world-view, a more natural and elementally "feminist" world-view that both redeems as much as in need of redemption themselves. Joshua's attempt to discard the influence of his grandfather is his emotional seme of flouting authority and resisting overbearing domination. Damaged by the scorn of pseudo-superiority around him, he becomes a disoriented and distressed individual who attempts to recreate his life in the only way he believes to be close to his mother's Christian faith of loving one's neighbour, for blessed are the peacemakers—the Indian way which he believes to be "close to nature," to be more specific in an earthy way. Beginning with the "killing of the trees," by the prejudiced and sadistically destructive Cartier brothers, and ending with the so-called altruism of Grandpa Cardiff's construction of the saw-mill to "help" the "forest people" "economically," Joshua is thrown into a world of ironies and paradoxes and surfaces to breathe the paradox of salvation. The title of the novel, *The Burning Wood*, is a composite and conscious integration of man, nature and creation; an authorial reconstruction of the first ever revelation of God to fallen man in the Book of Genesis—at the 'burning bush.' The restructured title is narratively significant, for God revealed himself before man to give authority over men for the first ever revolution for freedom from bondage. Even as "the burning bush" is the sacred sign of authoritative hope, where the medium itself becomes the message, "the burning wood" is the modern sign of a new revolution; this time against hypocritical patriarchal authorities in a world that needs redemption, a world where the eternal neighbours are man and his planetary home. The adjective "burning" suggests the burning of passions of lust and possessive desire as evinced by Eliot in *The Waste Land* (1921). It suggests the Buddhist world-view of everything in this world being set afire by desire, supported by the confessional mood of St. Augustine who refers to the biblical Joshua as a high priest, a brand plucked out of fire (Zechariah 3:2). Anthony Aspler, referring to this, suggests that the noun "wood" connotes the dual symbols of crucifixion in the novel: the Christian and the pagan, White and Indian. Both acts recognize the phases of sin and suffering, of unredeemed man, and end in the awaital of a salvation: one dying for the other to be resurrected and thus resurrect others, and the other resurrecting a vision in order to "die" into a sacred cause and thus seek "a spiritual readjustment" (Aspler 64).

The Burning Wood also connotes the act of burning forests to clear land for agriculture by the whites, as well as the burning away of the life-line of the Crees and thus, earth itself. The title gathers greater significance when Grandpa Cardiff sets out to destroy the Indians' cultural life in the name of saving their material life, by cutting down trees to be

hewed at a saw mill in which these Indian are to be given employment. Joshua views this as a patriarchal diabolism; the use stealth in destroying the Indians with their own hands and be applauded for it as a bonus. Joshua witnesses the role model leaning on commerce more than compassion. The Francophone Cartiers, like their "mechanical caterpillar," prove to be inhuman machines of ruthless, even sadistic, destruction hiding, ironically, their "unfeeling ways" (Williams 50) behind a mask of music, even as the Anglophone Cardiff hides his dislike of the Crees in a mask of religious concern. Both are anti-ecological voices of "gentleman-killers" for, ironically, they are "real gentlemen with anything but a tree" (47) even as the Fundamentalist Grandpa is a real gentleman with anything but a Cree.

As much as the topic of the Cree Indians forms the paradoxical periphery of Grandpa Cardiff's fears, the destruction of the forests and trees forms the analogical base of contention for Joshua's justification of his defense of both. The Indians represent the slowly dissipating cultural tradition of the past; the symbolic displacement of a "totemic" structure replaced by technology in the form of an environmentally destructive sawmill. The woodland is the Indians home; by giving them a "job" of cutting down trees Grandpa is feared to destroy their land and their cultural lives. Joshua's belief that his Grandpa is hurting the Indians instead of helping them with the saw-mill is the realization of his own margins set by his family for being the freak "bald child," "crowned" so, supposedly, for the evils of his great-grandfather. The sins of the father would logically fall on the head of his children, and children's children.

Reinhold Kramer in his essay "Canada then Scatology, then the Novels of David Williams," referring to the topic of "Canada-as-gap" (182) defines a border as "not a connection but an interval of resonance" (180) and believes that "the recourse to other histories of production, consumption, power and ideology may, conversely, be read as flight from our own historical works" (182). Man's greed to possess and his egotism to control have resulted, historically in the driving of the first stake of many such stakes of claim, literally and metaphorically, into the bosom of the earth. Staking a claim is the human version of an animalistic urgency to mark one's territory by the act of excretion. An animal knows and holds "its territory by wasting" carefully while the human violates cultures by mindless scarring of the earth. The modern necessity to recycle in order to remove is the inevitable outcome of laying waste a good and healthy relationship with nature. Modern cultures can be known only by their wastes and a scared rivers of life poisoned by greed.

Williams uses this metaphor of marking territory (the laying of fences by the whites, and the Indian urinating on the snow) across cultures thus tracing the marginalisation of the native that haunts Canadian history as much as the mainstream imposition of "marking" one's anti-ecological signature in the "clearing" of native forests, or the "cleaning up" of the "pagan soul" as demonstrated by Grandpa Cardiff. Williams' protagonist, though fallible and weak, is nonetheless a person of strength in his impartial outlook on a common humanity and espies true heroism in self-appraisal before "apprising" the other. Thus, Joshua "goes Indian in order to mitigate a growing sense that his Christian culture has betrayed its ideals" (Kramer 182). When a culture called him a thief, Joshua sensed his own

marginality in that culture. Whether "humbug" or "land," it had been given by a supreme authority and Joshua believes it to be relevant for all. Indiscriminate use of this gift results in destruction and dismay on all sides. The question of "authority" and its relativeness, therefore forms an important topic of discussion in the novels of Williams, and its logical and psychological extension implicates the authority of the "Creator," be he human or divine. This radicalism of thought has, "unfortunately," outlawed Williams in the eyes of some of the conventional and orthodox critics.

The Burning Wood is about relating reality and relationships—human and elemental—and the need for accommodation in all. Williams, like Horace, who exposes human follies and hypocrisies inevitable in all mankind, irrespective of colour, creed or country. William's is of the belief that the whole earth, all creation, and not just humankind alone, needs salvation; salvation ironically from man himself. In line with his faith in the relativity of life and the reality of inter-connectedness of the earth and mankind, his novel deals with the need for respecting the other; for wholeness through integration is a divine creative reality and not just some religious or utopian dream. The existentialist in Williams believes in the faith that matter or the real is primarily important in order to appreciate the essence of the ideal. In other words, the earth with all its functional beauty has to be preserved and protected in order that the essence of creation is appreciated for all time to come. It is crucial that new ways be found for healing the dangerous splits that threaten the planet—between religion and science, between discursive knowledge and intuitive wisdom, between individual missions and corporate license, between selfish profiteering and selfless preservation.

The questions that underlie appropriate ecological decision-making, which William raises namely, how does the world of multiplicities of human relationships work? And what is right or wrong, or evil or good, therefore, have to be addressed in a relative and inter-connected context. The modern ecological crises confronting us clearly marks what happens when empirical knowledge is divorced from question of meaning and value. Williams' novels discuss this issue on the need to care, to comfort and to heal the wounds made by man on man and man on nature. He presents the fact that good "earth keeping" *(oikologia)* begins with good "home keeping" (*oikonomia*); in arousing the awareness in every man, woman and child the need for erasing emotional margins and creating conducive climates of co-existence. Thus, recycling and restructuring human relationships and creating a fairly conducive climate of co-existence are interconnected themes of *The Burning Wood.*

The Earth Summit in Rio, in June 1992, placed environment and development at the centre of international politics. It also brought to focus the patriarchal benevolent role of the developed countries over the developing countries in a new light over the global management of forests. The developing countries pointed out that it would be an act of direct interference in the sovereign rights of the developing countries and hence it was a protectionist policy. Amidst such a global concern over our eco-system the voices of eco-entrepreneurs, such as ours, should supply the moral, intellectual and emotional support

through such seminars and dialogues and discussion. Hence, care should be taken that in fighting for and standing for what we believe to be right, we must not blindly ignore or hide out our wrongs. Even the interpretation of the Canadian landscape by literary critics of Canadian writing is envisioned as a cold, vast, inhospitable wilderness where many generations have sought to eke out a living against overwhelming odds. This "monstrous" depiction of Nature, as propagated by Atwoods' *Survival* though warrants a certain amount of truth, provides only one side of the picture. Frye, in *The Bush Garden* (1971) speaks of how literary analogies of the Canadian environment are presented in terms of the human fear of nature; at the same time there also is in Canadian Literature a romance with natural imagery where serenity and tranquility are included in the Canadian perceptional canvas.

Williams believes in the relativity of events and the relativization of truths. His world-view does not assume anything to be superior to the other, but believes in the co-existence of an inter-related, inter-textual and interdependent world existing as structural binaries such as man/woman, natural/supernatural, sacred/profane, light/darkness, the langue and parlor of an ever generating creation and generated re-creation. In Aldous Huxley's utopian novel, *The Island*, written soon after his distopic *The Brave New World,* the author comes out with his world-view that the ideal can be experienced and realized in the real and only through the real world. The same is the concern of Williams; the world of margins and mainstreams, of centers and peripheries, of earth's destruction and the toiletization, are literal and metaphoric wastes that have to be consciously recycled if the future of human and natural worlds are to be redeemed.

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Hamlet: A *Rasa-Dhvani* Approach*

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I

Hamlet and the *Rasa* Theory

Indian dramatic tradition lays prime emphasis on the emotions aroused in the audience. It is not the motivation of the protagonist but the emotions of the audience that is taken into consideration. There is however a link between the two. The entire atmosphere of the theatrical presentation including the emotions expressed by the actor or actress creates a specific mental state in the mind of the viewer. This mental state or feeling could gradually intensify leading to a longer lasting emotion or it could vanish immediately and become quickly replaced by another. In this manner, the whole dramatic presentation produces a series of emotions either durable or momentary, so that for the spectator the play basically becomes a journey through a wide spectrum of emotions.

In case of *Hamlet*, the protagonist occupies a central position in the generation of emotions. As it can be seen later, with a few exceptions, the whole emotional process of the viewer revolves around Hamlet. One reason is that unlike other Shakespearean characters like Macbeth or Othello, Hamlet is an upright man and his suffering as a hero enjoys a much higher degree of empathy from the audience. Moreover there is not a single scene in the entire play where Hamlet doesn't figure and his powerful soliloquies touch the audience at a higher mental plane. Keeping this in mind, I proceed to make a detailed analysis of the entire play taking the theory of *rasa* with all its intricacies into account, in order to study the development of the individual *rasas*.

ACT I

The opening scene of the play arouses a feeling of wonder *(adbhuta rasa)* and then strikes fear *(bhayānaka rasa)* in the audience at the mention of the apparition:

Marcellus: ...Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us.
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That if again this apparition come....

(I. i: 23-26)

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The feelings of fear and wonder are intensified at the appearance of the Ghost:

Horatio: ....It harrows me with fear and wonder.

(I. i: 42)

But since wonder and fear cannot co-exist, being opposing emotions, it is fear or *bhayānaka rasa*, which supersedes wonder.

Running parallel to wonder, there is a trace of valour or heroism *(vīra rasa)* at the sight of the Ghost, which had appeared in the form of the deceased king, in all his knightly armour:

Marcellus: Is it not like the King?

Horatio: ...Such was the very armour he had on
When he th' ambitious Norway combated.
So frowned he once when, in an angry parley
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

(I. i: 57-63)

Vyabhicārībhāvas or secondary feelings of doubt, suspicion and apprehension appear simultaneously to aid and intensify the basic emotion of fear or *bhayānaka rasa:*

Horatio: ...This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

(I. i: 68)

Barnardo: ...How now, Horatio! You tremble and look pale.

(I. i: 51)

The transitory feeling of doubt is reflected in line 63 ('Tis strange), whereas suspicion is reflected in lines 106.2 to 106.4:

Barnardo: ...Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armèd through our watch so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.

We notice feelings of apprehension in the following lines:

Horatio: ...And even the like precurse of feared events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates,
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climature and countrymen.

(I. i: 106.14-106.18)

Vīra rasa or heroism reiterates in several places like:

Horatio: Such was the very armour he had on
When he th' ambitious Norway combated.
So frowned he once when, in an angry parley
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice

(I. i: 59-62)

Horatio: ...our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was as you know by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteemed him—
Did slay this Fortinbras...

(I. i: 79-85)

And:

Horatio: ...In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell....

(I. i: 106.6-106.7)

These momentary emotions again give way to wonder and amazement at the reappearance of the Ghost, re-instilling the fear *(bhayānaka rasa)* in the audience. The strange phenomenon initially evoking wonder, eventually leads to fear or *bhayānaka rasa.* So wonder and fear alternate in quick succession until wonder succumbs to fear. Both opposing emotions appear to be equally powerful, but it is the negative emotion of fear, which suppresses its opponent wonder, and takes precedence. The transitory feelings *(vyabhicārībhāvas)* arising out of these emotions are doubt, suspicion and apprehension. *Vīra rasa* introduced at an early stage, though inherently a basic or durable emotion, becomes overpowered by fear and is reduced to the status of a secondary emotion like its counterpart, wonder. Thus fear manifests itself as the dominant *rasa.*

The second scene reveals Hamlet's instinctive distrust towards Claudius and his utter disgust *(jugupsā bhāva)* for the queen for her hasty marriage with her brother-in-law, a union he calls "incest." The intensity of his disgust is artfully exhibited throughout the scene as in the following lines:

Hamlet: ...frailty, thy name is woman—
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body
Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she—
O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
Would have mourned longer!—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules; within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing of her galled eyes,
She married. O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

(I. ii: 146-157)

Hamlet's bitterness (disgust) can also be seen in lines 175-182:

Horatio: My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.
Hamlet: I prithee do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.
Horatio: Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.
Hamlet: Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio.

Through Hamlet's disgust, *bibhatsa rasa* (aversion) is created in the minds of the audience. Associated with this emotion are other subsidiary feelings or *vyabhicārībhāvas* like Hamlet's mood of dejection at certain periods. When Gertrude expresses her concern that it seems like Hamlet is still mourning the loss of his father, he reaffirms it in the following passage:

Hamlet: Seems, madam? Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good-mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected behaviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief
That can denote me truly. These indeed 'seem,'
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passeth show—
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

(I. ii: 76-86)

One also notices signs of dejection in the following lines of *Hamlet*:

Hamlet: O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God, O God,
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

(I. ii: 129-133)

Intertwined with *bibhatsa rasa* or aversion is another subsidiary feeling of suspicion caused by Hamlet's inherent distrust towards Claudius, revealed in line 65 where he describes him as "A little more than kin and less than kind." Also Hamlet's words "I am too much I' th' sun" (line 67) can give rise to variety of meanings. This is a typical example of *dhvani*, which will be discussed in later chapters. The unpleasant feelings of doubt and suspicion are also clearly perceived in Hamlet's remark, "All is not well. I doubt some foul play." (lines 254-255)

In the second part of this scene, wonder or *adbhuta rasa* is again experienced when Horatio, Marcellus and Bernardo relate their experience with the Ghost.

Like in the first scene *adbhuta rasa* or wonder fades to the background, and *bībhatsa rasa* or disgust emerges more prominent.

Scene III does not evoke any *rasa*. Both Polonius and Laertes try to give some sound advice to Ophelia warning her not to succumb to Hamlet's advancements and proclamations of love. This scene reflects a temporary feeling of doubt *(vyabhicārībhāva)* regarding Hamlet's fidelity as a lover. The feeling of doubt is an associate of the basic emotion of love or *śṛṅgāra rasa*.

Scene IV again brings forth the emotion of wonder *(adbhuta rasa)* at the reentry of the Ghost. There is a strong feeling of suspicion as to the real identity and intention of the Ghost:

Hamlet: ...Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape...

(I. iv: 21-24)

Adbhuta rasa or wonder is immediately followed by the predominant emotion of fear or *bhayānaka rasa*. This fear gives rise to suspicion of the Ghost's motives:

Hamlet: Why, what should be the fear?...
Horatio: What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness?...

(I. iv: 45-55)

Scene V displays a sense of shock and anger at the Ghost's revelation. Its anger caused by Claudius' heinous crime is transmitted to Hamlet and manifests itself as *raudra rasa*. The Ghost's fury is expressed in the following words:

Ghost: Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

(I. v: 25)

Hamlet's fury is expressed in the following lines:

Hamlet: O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell? O fie! Hold, hold, my heart...

(I. v: 92-93)

Side by side this anger is tainted with contempt and disgust towards Claudius and Gertrude:

Ghost: Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts-
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power

So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen...

(I. v: 42-46)

Disgust and anger is also shown in the following words of Hamlet's speech:

Hamlet: O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damnèd villain!

(I. v: 105-106)

One also notices transient feelings *(vyabhicārībhāva)* of sadness or dejection:

Ghost: ...O Hamlet, what a falling off was there!—
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand-in-hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

(I. v: 47-52)

There is a trace of heroism *(vīra rasa)* when Hamlet swears revenge after the Ghost's revelation. "I have sworn't (line 113). However *vīra rasa* is only a minor emotion. *Raudra rasa* (anger) and disgust *(bibhatsa rasa)* are the two major rasas of equal prominence.

ACT II

In the first scene of the second act, we are confronted with the emotion of sorrow or *śoka bhāva* expressed by Hamlet and interpreted by Polonius as "the ecstasy of love" (line 104). The *anubhāvas* or physical gestures expressing Hamlet's sorrow or madness have been described in the following lines:

Ophelia: He took me by the wrist, and held me hard,
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As a would draw it. Long stayed he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes,
For out o'doors he went without their help,
And to the last bended their light on me.

(II. i: 88-101)

The reason of Hamlet's sorrow or apparent madness is left unexplained and therefore fails to arise any specific *rasa* in the audience. At the most Hamlet's outward behaviour could lead to a temporary feeling of pity *(vyabhicārībhāva)*.

The second scene introduces an element of humour and brings out *hāsya rasa* (comic) in the audience. The source of this *hāsya* or laughter is Polonius' buffoonery, who is convinced of Hamlet's love-sickness and vehemently believes that to be the cause of his madness. Polonius' exaggerated speech only evokes ridicule and exasperates Gertrude for its redundancy and poor wit. Not coming straight to the point, he goes on beating around the bush, trying to arouse suspense with a ludicrous jumble of words:

Polonius: ...My liege and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
What day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time,
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad—
'Mad' call I it, for to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen Gertrude: More matter with less art.

Polonius: Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true a foolish figure,
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him, then, and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect—
Or rather say the cause of this *defect*,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus
Perpend.
I have a daughter—have whilst she is mine—
Who in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this...

(II. ii: 87-109)

Later Hamlet's dialogue with Polonius also brings out *hāsya rasa* (comic) by force of its wit and humour. Hamlet's madness seems to be a pretended madness and there is much truth and irony in his seemingly senseless words:

Hamlet: Slanders, sir; for the satirical slave says here that old men have
grey beards...

Polonius: [aside] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.
—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?
Hamlet: Into my grave?
Polonius: Indeed, that's out o'th' air. [Aside] How pregnant sometimes his replies are!
A happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of...

(II. ii: 196-209)

In the next few lines Hamlet expresses his disgust or *jugupsā bhāva* at the turn of events in an implicit manner:

Hamlet: In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true, she is a strumpet.

(II ii: 230-231)

His disgust becomes more explicit when he calls Denmark a prison:

Hamlet: ...What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?
Guildenstern: Prison, my lord?
Hamlet: Denmark's a prison.
Rosencrantz: Then is the world one.
Hamlet: A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' th' worst.
Rosencrantz: We think not so, my lord.
Hamlet: Why then'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

(II ii: 235-245)

Hamlet's *jugupsā bhāva* leads to *bībhatsa rasa* (disgust) in the audience. The feelings *(vyabhicārībhāvas)* of dejection and world-weariness expressed by Hamlet in the following lines intensify the *bībhatsa rasa:*

Hamlet: ...I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory. This most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire—why it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.
What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving, how express and admirable, in action, how like an angel, in apprehension, how like a god—the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals!
And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me—nor woman neither....

(II ii: 287-299)

His disgust comes to the surface at his referral to the king and queen as his "uncle-father" and "aunt-mother" (line 358).

Though the mood changes to the comic at Polonius' entry, it remains tainted with disgust. Due to his foolish assumptions and unwanted intrusion, Polonius seems to have become an object of ridicule and aversion for Hamlet:

Hamlet: ...That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swathing clouts.

(II ii: 365-366)

Hamlet seems to find pleasure in encouraging Polonius' absurd notions of his behaviour and love-sickness for Ophelia:

Hamlet: For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion-have you a daughter?

Polonius: I have, my lord.

Hamlet: Let her not walk I' th'sun. Conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive-friend, look to't.

Polonius: [aside] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first... and truly, in my youth I suffered much extremity for love. Very near this.

(II ii: 182-190)

Hamlet: O Jephthah, judge of Israel,what a treasure hadst thou!

Polonius: What a treasure had he,my lord?

Hamlet: Why,

'One fair daughter and no more,
The which he loved passing well.'

Polonius: [aside] Still on my daughter

(II ii: 385-391)

Next follows the emotion of fear. The players arrive. Hamlet and one of the players recite a few lines of the play, *Aeneas' tale* to Dido, referring to Priam's slaughter by Pyrrhus. The gory details of the slaughter combined with the anticipation of Claudius' death in a similar manner, lend it an emotion of fear producing *bhayānaka rasa* in the audience.

This is again replaced by Hamlet's disgust; this time directed at his own self, at his inability to take action. Apparently in a confused state of mind, he calls himself a coward:

Hamlet: ...Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing;...Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face,
Tweaks me by th' nose, gives me the lie I' th' throat

As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha, 'swounds, I should take it; for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall....Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O, vengeance!-
Why, what an ass am I! Ay, sure, This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words.....

(II ii: 543-563)

There is also anger and disgust for the king combined with disgust for his own self. However what he calls inaction doesn't seem to be so when viewed in the correct light. It is his sensitivity and self- restraint, which does not allow him to take any rash decision, let passion overpower his reasoning or prompt him to action without proper evidence. Not following blindly the Ghost's command, Hamlet seeks to verify the truth and appeal to his own better judgement before taking any decision. Despite his instinctive distrust for Claudius, he doesn't get carried away by the Ghost's words and wants to give the accused a fair chance. He couldn't condemn a non-guilty person however much he despised him. His calculated reasoning and fair judgement, even during periods of turbulence show true heroism in his nature.

As we can see, the predominating emotion in this scene is disgust which grips Hamlet almost constantly, mainly directed at his mother and her newly-wed husband and partly at Polonius for his unwanted intervention. The *rasa* derived is thus, *bībhatsa rasa*.

ACT III

In the first scene of the third act the king and queen discuss the cause of Hamlet's lunacy with Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Polonius. Claudius views Hamlet's madness with suspicion. Guildenstern echoes this feeling, which is evident from the following lines:

King Claudius: And can you by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

(III i: 1-4)

Guildenstern: ...But with a crafty madness keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

(III i: 8-10)

The king's suspicion stems from his guilt that builds up a sense of insecurity from the fear of his crime being found out. The first clear indication of his guilt is seen in the passage below:

King Claudius: [aside] O, 'tis too true.
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience.
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burden!

(III i.52-56)

Next we come to those famous lines in the play:

Hamlet: To be, or not to be; that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing end them.....

(III i: 58-62)

Hamlet is in a state of inner conflict and deep contemplation. He does not allow his passion to cloud his reasoning. What is crucial to him is that he takes the nobler decision—whether to suffer the "slings of fortune" or to fight and oppose it. At the same time he condemns himself for not taking immediate action and blames his own conscience for being the cause of his cowardice:

Hamlet: Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action...

(III i: 85-90)

Another cause of his utter dejection is unfulfilled love. Ophelia's rejection of his sincere love intensifies his grief, what he calls the "pangs of disprized love" (line 74). Hamlet's mental confusion and sorrow triggers *karuṇa rasa* (sorrow) in the audience.

Complementing Hamlet's dejection and sorrow is his total disgust. The disgust for his mother has developed into an aversion for womankind in general. He is disappointed with Ophelia for not responding to him and for being a puppet to her father's manipulation. His apparent harshness towards Ophelia actually discloses his contempt for the whole women race:

Hamlet: Ay, truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof....
You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it.

Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou be a breeder
Of sinners?...

(III i: 113-123)

He also derides Polonius when he says that "he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house" (lines 132-133).

Hidden behind all this confusion and outpour of emotion, there lies however a firmness in decision contradicting his previous soliloquy about his lack of decision (to be or not to be...).

Hamlet says in lines 147-148—"Those that are married already—all but one—shall live." This is an emphatic statement that Claudius is going to die at his hands.

Claudius who has overheard Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia is shrewd in detecting some melancholy in his countenance. For Claudius, this is a clear signal of a forthcoming danger. A guilty man, constantly aware of the crime he has committed, his fear gets rekindled and he plans to dispatch Hamlet off to England. His final words of caution are, "Madness in great ones must not unwatched go" (line 188).

So, in this scene, we notice the transitory feelings of suspicion and dejection. There is the major emotion of fear, which becomes overpowered and hence doesn't rise to the status of the main *rasa*. Hamlet, the character has become dominated by aversion and sorrow and as a whole produces *karuṇa rasa* (sorrow) in the audience.

In scene II the play is staged before the royal couple and other courtiers. Before the play begins, Hamlet gives instructions to Horatio to observe Claudius' reaction to the murder scene. Behind Hamlet's apparent inaction and confusion lies a rational thinking mind. He wants to set a trap for Claudius to test his guilt. He doesn't take the Ghost's words to be true without evidence. And he couldn't kill anyone without proper justification. Once Claudius' guilt is out in the open, Hamlet wouldn't hesitate to slay him and avenge his father's death. This is a truly heroic trait in his character.

Before the opening of the play, he behaves in a somewhat rude manner with Ophelia, even indulging in ribaldry:

Hamlet: ...here's mettle more attractive.
Do you think I meant country matters?
That's a fair thought to lie between maid's legs

(III ii: 99,105 &107)

These words actually reflect Hamlet's disgust but may not be strong enough to create *bībhatsa rasa* (disgust) as they are targeted towards Ophelia who remains an innocent victim of circumstances in the whole play. Rather they may arouse the transitory feeling of pity for her amongst the audience. Hamlet expresses his derision for Gertrude quite explicitly when he says:

Hamlet: ...For look how cheerfully my mother looks,
and my father died within's two hours.

(III ii: 114-115)

The play opens with the king and queen expressing their love for each other. The queen's exaggerated promises and vows of love and fidelity becomes only a mockery and generates *bībhatsa rasa* or disgust.

But the critical moment comes in the murder scene when the king suddenly arises giving clear evidence of his guilt. This is the moment Hamlet has been waiting for. The trap is successful and his purpose accomplished. Both Hamlet and Horatio are convinced of the Ghost's words. The situation is not powerful enough to generate any specific *rasa* but induces a strong feeling of excitement *(vyabhicārībhāva).*

Then enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern for a private word with Hamlet. He is totally aware of the two men's intention, which is to extract the truth from him and convey it to the king. From the very beginning Hamlet views them with suspicion and contempt. In the midst of their conversation Polonius enters and passes him the queen's message that she wished to see him in her private chamber. Hamlet sets out on his second purpose of explaining to Gertrude of her infidelity to her first husband. He wants to prick her conscience by making her aware of her unfaithfulness and lack of virtue.

As it can be seen, there are transitory feelings of suspicion, pity and excitement reinforcing the main emotions in this scene. However there are two major emotions overlapping each other, i.e., disgust and heroism. The sources of disgust are the king and the queen as well as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. But Hamlet's attitude displays one of heroism. However, being opposing emotions they repel each other and cannot occur simultaneously. In this case, following the *rasa* theorists, disgust *(bībhatsa)* gets the upper hand and becomes the principal emotion.

In the third scene, the king plans to send away Hamlet immediately to England, becoming aware that his dangerous secret is out. He asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to accompany Hamlet in this "speedy voyage." Claudius acts purely out of fear from Hamlet's wrath. His fear has turned into panic when he says to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:

King Claudius: Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage,
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

(III iii: 24-26)

Claudius is assayed by a strong sense of guilt. He calls his murder as that which has "the primal eldest curse upon't" (line 37). Though he wishes his sins to be washed away, he is unable to repent for his deeds. He knows atonement is not possible unless he rids himself of his ambition and other worldly desires which led him to fratricide:

King Claudius: ...My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And like a man to double business bound
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens

To wash it white as snow.....
but O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
That cannot be, since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder—
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.

(III iii: 40-55)

When the king kneels in prayer, Hamlet enters and finds a golden opportunity to slay him. But his over analytical mind steps in between. He doesn't believe his father's death will be avenged if he kills his murderer at prayer, for to take a man in the purging of his soul would only send him to heaven. By slaying Claudius now, he would undoubtedly follow the Ghost's command but its purpose would be lost.

So, here we find the subsidiary feeling of guilt *(vyabhicārībhāva)* arising out of Claudius' fear, the primary emotion in this scene.

In the final scene (scene iv) of this act Polonius is slain by Hamlet. The purpose of killing Polonius is however, not clear. It could be that he mistakes Polonius for the king and slays him. Or it could be that Hamlet considers Polonius to be a prying nuisance and a danger to his motives and takes the opportunity to do away with him.

After getting rid of Polonius, Hamlet proceeds to goad his mother's conscience, to make her realize her gross mistake in forgetting her first husband and remarrying so hastily. In a rhapsody of words he praises his father and condemns the evil Claudius. It is his aim to prick his mother's conscience and make her see her own folly. Despite his contempt for Gertrude, he doesn't see her beyond atonement. He wants his mother to be cleared of all sins. In true repentance would her sin be atoned which is Hamlet's goal at the moment. Hamlet succeeds in his efforts when Gertrude begins to see her folly. Consumed by guilt she utters the following words:

Queen Gertrude: O Hamlet, speak no more!
Thou turn'st my eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.

Hamlet: Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseaméd bed,
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty—

Queen Gertrude: O, speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter my ears.
No more, sweet Hamlet.

(III iv: 78-86)

Hamlet: ...Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,

And do not spread the compost o'er the weeds
To make them ranker....

Queen Gertrude: O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain!

(III iv: 140-147)

In justly turning away Gertrude from Claudius, Hamlet secures his first triumph over the murderer. Also in killing Polonius, he removes one thorn from his path. This success of the hero generates *vīra rasa* (heroism) and remains the principal emotion in this scene.

There are several transient feelings or *vyabhicārībhāvas* in this scene as well. There is surprise when Hamlet physically forces Gertrude to sit down; taken aback she shouts for help. There is visible shock at the unexpected killing of Polonius. There is the strong feeling of guilt already mentioned before. There is amazement at the appearance of the Ghost. The Ghost, which remains invisible to the queen causes great amazement to her when Hamlet talks to it. She believes him to be mad and calls it "the very coinage of his brain" (line 127). Then the transient feeling of contempt appears when Hamlet talks of his two "friends" who are to accompany him on his voyage to England:

Hamlet: There's letters sealed, and my two school-fellows—
Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged....

(III iv: 185.1-185.2)

And lastly disappointment is expressed when Gertrude remembers of Hamlet's impending journey to England:

Hamlet: I must of England.
You know that?

Queen Gertrude: Alack, I had forgot.
'Tis so concluded on.

(III iv: 182-185)

ACT IV

The first scene of Act IV looks like a stage of confusion caused by Polonius' death. The queen is in a state of shock at the turn of events. Still shaken by her son's behaviour she blurts out before Claudius:

Queen Gertrude: Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips his rapier out and cries 'A rat, a rat!,'
And in his brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

(IV i: 6-10)

It is now the king's turn to be shocked. His fear is rekindled and he dreads of what is to come. Completely aware now of Hamlet's wrath, he realizes he might well have been

the victim instead of Polonius. The transient feeling arising out of his fear is deception when he talks of his love for Hamlet. This is deception at its worst as in reality he is designing the murder of Hamlet, whom he considers his arch enemy at the moment. Losing no time he plans to ship off Hamlet the very next morning along with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Shaken to the roots, Claudius exclaims that his "soul is full of discord and dismay" (line 40).

The main emotion or *rasa* in this scene is undoubtedly fear or *bhayānaka rasa* intensified by the subsidiary feelings or *vyabhicārībhāvas* of shock and deception.

The second scene emits pure *bībhatsa rasa* or aversion. The king, his courtiers—Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and Polonius are all objects of Hamlet's aversion. He overtly expresses his contempt for the villainy of Claudius and the sycophancy of Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Polonius. His contempt is matched by his wit when he replies to Rosencrantz's query:

Rosencrantz: Take you me for a sponge, my lord?
Hamlet: Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his
rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service
in the end. He keeps them like an apple in the corner of his jaw,
corner of his jaw, first mouthed to be last swallowed. When he needs
what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you and,
sponge you shall be dry again.

(IV ii: 13-19)

Hamlet's witty sarcasm continues into the next scene when he calls the king a food for worms and addresses him as his mother. The comic interrupts Hamlet's contempt at this stage:

King Claudius: Now, Hamlet where's Polonius?
Hamlet: At supper.
King Claudius: At supper? Where?
Hamlet: Not where he eats, but where a is eaten. A certain
convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is
your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us,
and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean
beggar is but variable service-two dishes, but to one table.
That's the end...
Hamlet: ...Farewell, dear mother.
King Claudius: Thy loving father, Hamlet.
Hamlet: My mother. Father and mother is man and wife, man
and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother....

(IV iii: 17-54)

These dialogues break the gravity of the whole atmosphere and can only erupt laughter *(hāsa)* in the audience.

In this scene the king reveals his wicked designs of getting Hamlet executed in England. He is shrewd enough to realize that killing or imprisoning Hamlet in Denmark would only bring about his own downfall as the prince is "loved of the distracted multitude" (line 4). This action of an evildoer, who doesn't flinch from committing one crime after the other, simply draws anger or *raudra rasa* from the audience.

So here both the emotions of *raudra rasa* (anger) and *hāsya rasa* (comic) run almost parallel to each other. Being friendly emotions, not opposed to the other, neither of them blocks the other and is free to take its own course. However, it may be concluded that *raudra rasa* ultimately prevails over *hāsya rasa* as it appears at the end of the scene, creating a more lasting impression.

The fourth scene generates *karuṇa rasa* or sorrow at Hamlet's pitiable condition. He believes himself to be a coward compared to Fortinbras who can march with pride with his vast army and has no compunction in laying down twenty thousand lives for the sake of a piece of land. In truth it is Hamlet's higher sensitivity and compassion and his regard for human life that stands in his way. But Hamlet calls this conflict within his heart and mind as cowardice. His dejection is the source of *karuṇa rasa* in the audience.

The fifth scene of this act is a prolific exhibition of Ophelia's anguish in the form of madness. Plunged in sorrow at Hamlet's rejection of her and her father's sudden death, she has gone mad. Her songs are clearly expressive of her longing for Hamlet *(vipralambha śṛṅgāra* or love-in-separation*)* and her grief at her father's death. Ophelia's mournful distraction fills the heart with tenderness and evokes pure *karuṇa rasa.*

Laertes brings in the emotion of anger or *raudra rasa.* Believing Claudius to be the cause of his father's death, he bravely confronts him swearing for vengeance. Seething with rage he challenges Claudius with the following words:

Laertes: How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.
To hell allegiance! Vows to the blackest devil,
Conscience and grace to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes. Only I'll be revenged
Most thoroughly for my father.

(IV v: 126-132)

Laertes' uncontrolled rage and fearless challenge are also signs of bravery. Here, *raudra rasa* (anger) unfolds heroism and gives rise to *vīra rasa* as well. The two friendly emotions support each other and run parallel.

Laertes is in for a second shock *(transient feeling* or *vyabhicārībhāva)* at the re-entry of Ophelia. His sister's loss of sanity doubles his grief resulting in *karuṇa rasa* in the audience. So the total effect in this scene is one of *karuṇa rasa, raudra rasa* and *vīra rasa* remaining only secondary.

In Scene VI, the sailors deliver Hamlet's letter to Horatio, where he expresses his wish to meet him as soon as possible. Hamlet's urgency stirs up some excitement *(vyabhicārībhāva)* in the audience of what is to follow. The scene is short and does not produce any *rasa.*

In the seventh and final scene of this act, Claudius is back in his own element, cunning and sly, contriving Hamlet's death at the hands of Laertes. Very tactfully, he tries to instigate Laertes against Hamlet, goading his conscience towards performing his filial duty of avenging his father's death:

King Claudius: Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

(IV vii: 89-91)

King Claudius: ...What would you undertake
To show yourself in deed your father's son in deed
More than in words?

(IV vii: 96-98)

Laertes' countenance is one of grief and rage:

Laertes: And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desp'rate terms,
Who has, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger, on mount, of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

(IV vii: 25-29)

A master of deception, Claudius plans a scheme with Laertes, to murder Hamlet:

King Claudius: Let's further think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape...Therefore this project
Should have a back or second that might hold
If this should blast in proof...
When in your motion you are hot and dry—
As make your bouts more violent to that end—
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escaped your venomed stuck,
Our purpose may hold there—

(IV vii: 120-133)

Claudius' amorality and wickedness can only bring out anger or *raudra rasa* in the audience. This *raudra rasa* is interrupted by sorrow or *karuṇa rasa* at the news of Ophelia's death. Her death while deepening Laertes' grief, adds fuel to the fire, intensifying his rage:

Laertes: Alas, then she is drowned?
Queen Gertrude: Drowned, drowned.
Laertes: Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
it is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will. When these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord.
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it.

(IV vii: 155-163)

So, the two major *rasas* of sorrow *(karuṇa)* and anger *(raudra)* appear simultaneously in equal intensity or alternate in quick succession. According to the *rasa* theory both these emotions are opposing and do not go with each other. However the opposition between two emotions can be removed by directing the opposite emotions on different objects, which is the case here. Claudius' vile scheming combined with Laertes' rage is the source of *raudra rasa* whereas Ophelia's madness and her subsequent death is the cause of *karuṇa rasa.*

ACT V

In the first scene, Ophelia's death can bring out no other emotion other than sadness or *karuṇa rasa.* The grim humour might provide some mental relief but may not draw laughter, as Ophelia's tragedy lies too heavily on the minds of the spectators.

Then follows the entry of the king, the queen and other royal attendants with Ophelia's corpse. A funeral scene particularly that of the innocent Ophelia, naturally culminates in *karuṇa rasa.* Hamlet is aghast at the mention of Ophelia's death; never for a moment having imagined the coffin to be carrying his beloved's body. From shock (transient feeling or *vyabhicārībhāva)* follows intense grief. The queens parting words pour salt to his wounds:

Hamlet: What, the fair Ophelia!
Queen Gertrude: [scattering flowers] Sweets to the sweet. Farewell.
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife.
I thought, thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
And not t' have strewed thy grave.

(V i: 226-230)

Both Hamlet and Laertes, in their mourning lose their composure, which is but natural in the face of grief, and end up in a tussle. Laertes attacks Hamlet believing him to be the cause of his sister and father's death. So the emotion of sorrow is momentarily interrupted by *raudra* or anger, breaking the continuity of *karuṇa rasa,* but only for a short period.

Hamlet's bereavement is genuine:

Hamlet: [Coming forward] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis, whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [Hamlet leaps in after Laertes]

(V i: 238-242)

Hamlet: I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.

(V i: 254-256)

These words speak of the depth of his love. He had loved Ophelia all along despite the fact that he had previously claimed not to have loved her anymore and perhaps broken her heart. *Śṛṅgāra rasa* (love) arises but subsides immediately in this tragic moment.

So the whole scene reverberates with *karuṇa rasa* only being shortly intermitted by *raudra rasa* (rage) and *śṛṅgāra rasa* (love). The introduction of these opposing emotions does not aid *karuṇa rasa* but only succeeds in breaking its continuity and becomes subordinate to it.

The second scene introduces more intrigue into the play. Hamlet, constantly suspicious of Claudius' motives accidentally discovers the latter's evil designs of doing away with him. Very cleverly, Hamlet foils his plans and sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to the gallows instead. Hamlet, thoroughly fed up with their sycophancy feels they deserve no better end:

Hamlet: Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
They are not near my conscience. Their defeat
Doth by their own insinuation grow.

(V ii: 58-60)

Any friend of the king, who is now Hamlet's sworn enemy, becomes an enemy too. From this viewpoint Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who are Claudius' friends are Hamlet's enemies and have been disposed off one after the other. It is unfortunate that Polonius happened to be the father of his beloved, but his constant interference and contriving had made him a formidable enemy. So he had to die. Gradually removing from his path, one thorn after the other, Hamlet seeks to reach his ultimate enemy, his final target.

On going through the play, the general impression could be that Hamlet has been procrastinating in his duty of avenging his father. But in retrospect, one can perceive fairly reasonable grounds for his supposed delay in action. First, he wanted clear evidence of Claudius' guilt. This is undisputedly an admirable strength of character. After his test, he is convinced of the latter's guilt by acquiring the evidence he has been looking for. But what evidence could he give to the people of Denmark? Who would believe his tale of a Ghost commanding him to action? Wouldn't his tale be misinterpreted as a guise for his thwarted ambition? In reality, it probably isn't that easy to slay Claudius as it appears in the play, and Hamlet has to look for a proper opportunity for it.

The final scene of the play is mainly a mixture of *vīra rasa* (heroism) and *karuṇa rasa* (sorrow) with a trace of sarcasm *(vyabhicārībhāva* or subsidiary feeling). The latest victim of this sarcasm is the courtier Osric, whom Hamlet calls a water-fly (line 84). This secondary feeling is too mild and fails to create the stronger emotion of disgust or *bībhatsa*.

Hamlet clearly displays his bravery in this scene. Not enraged by Laertes' violent attack on him in the cemetery, Hamlet acknowledges the injustice he has done to Laertes and fully understands the tumult in his mind:

Hamlet: ...But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.
But sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a tow'ring passion.

(V ii: 76-81)

Without any compunction or a moment's hesitation, Hamlet accepts Laertes' challenge for a duel, in spite of being aware of the latter's ingenuity in sword fighting. As befits a hero, with true humility, he asks for Laertes' pardon and accepts his hand of friendship:

Hamlet: [to Laertes]. Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you wrong;
But pardon't as you are a gentleman....
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother.

(V ii: 163-181)

Hamlet's triumph lies in Laertes' forgiveness and acceptance of his hand of friendship. But Laertes' forgiveness doesn't make him flinch from a battle, notably a sign of bravery:

Laertes: ...I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.
Hamlet: I do embrace it freely,
And will this brothers' wager frankly play.
[To attendants] Give us the foils.

(V ii: 188-192)

Throughout the combat Hamlet shows his skill and courage. He commits his final act of heroism in slaying the king, fulfilling the task of the Ghost and his duty towards his father.

Karuṇa or sorrow is obviously generated at the death of the hero. Before dying Hamlet is cleared of the burden of his guilt, when Laertes realizes his falling into the trap of the king's plotting. His words serve to intensify the depth of the sorrow:

Laertes: He is justly served.
It is a poison tempered by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me.

(V ii: 269-273)

The play ends with a final homage to Hamlet's nobleness and bravery complementing the atmosphere of sorrow or *karuṇa*:

Fortinbras: ...Let four captains
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally; and for this passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.

(V ii: 339-344)

As we have seen, a play according to the Sanskrit canon must have a single dominant emotion although there may be several other subsidiary emotions. Hamlet initially deals with two emotions disgust *(bībhatsa rasa)* and courage *(vīra rasa)*, the former dominating the latter until the middle of the play when courage or heroism and sorrow *(karuṇa rasa)* start taking precedence. Thereafter the course of his action is so confused that the audience is at a loss to be sure of the dominating emotion. There is no doubt that Hamlet loved Ophelia, as also the world and the life around him. But a series of events following the death of his father, such as his mother's marriage to Claudius and the latter's coronation, have aroused a strong aversion in Hamlet, for all that he loved earlier. It is not only his mother; Ophelia has also been a target, though not directly. Polonius has been his target because of his narrow thinking and feeble way of action, deciding always to coax the king. From the very beginning Polonius considers Hamlet's peculiar behaviour as a sign of madness and melancholy due to his love for Ophelia and rather foolishly tries to convince both the king and the queen about this matter. It is for this foolishness that he has also been a target of Hamlet's aversion or disgust. Hamlet also expresses his aversion for all those sycophants like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who had their associations with and subservience to the king. His aversion is not definite until his experience with the Ghost and this aversion is not confirmed until the performance of a drama within a drama. Although the Ghost particularly asks Hamlet not to take any action against his mother, it nevertheless goads him to hit her conscience. Hamlet thus obeys the Ghost and stimulates Gertrude to realize the sin she has committed. It seems the characters that are the targets of his aversion only consider him mad, or rather, in reverse, he is pretending to be mad while dealing with them. He speaks to his mother in the closet scene:

Hamlet: ...That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.

(III iv: 171-172)

What is revealed ironically *(vyañjanā)* is that both the king and Polonius are simply insensitive persons. The king is insensitive because of his brutality, cruelty and selfish opportunism. Polonius' selfishness lies in his foolish assumptions. Gertrude is undoubtedly intuitive as befits a mother. But this intuition and sensitivity are forcefully suppressed. While the king is shrewd and intelligent in studying Hamlet, Polonius' analyses

are only ridiculously superficial. It is only Gertrude who has a real sense of concern and pity for Hamlet. She is truly worried and wishes that Hamlet's good sense be restored. Hamlet's aversion for his mother has reasonably diminished his love and devotion for her. A serious and sensitive man of Hamlet's character would obviously pay more priority of attention to carry out the instructions of the Ghost. And in doing so the warmth of love would naturally get cold. Here is the source of the emotion of sorrow or *karuṇa*. The total situation now is sufficiently intensified *(ālambana vibhāva)* to stimulate sorrow. A situation, which, Bharata calls curse *(śāpa)* and Abhinavagupta interprets as *aśakya pratikāra*—an adverse situation beyond any remedy *(pratikāra)*. The hero is unable to overcome it although he wants to overcome it. Hamlet misbehaves with Ophelia consciously and intentionally but not deliberately. As S.H. Butcher considers this as one of the four types of hamartia originally pointed out by Aristotle, as causing sorrow and suffering of a tragic hero. To quote Butcher at length:

> As a synonym of hamartia and as applied to a single act, it denotes an error due to inadequate knowledge of particular circumstances. According to strict usage we should add the qualification, that the circumstances are such as might have been known. Thus it would cover any error of judgement arising from a hasty or careless view of the special case; an error which in some degree is morally culpable, as it might have been avoided. Error of this kind has the highest claim to pity or consideration. But the more proper term ishatuchema 'misfortune.' In either case, however the hamartia is also more laxly applied to an error due to unavoidable ignorance, for which error is unintentional; it arises from want of knowledge; and its good quality will depend on whether the individual is himself responsible for his ignorance. Distinct from this, but still limited in its reference to a single act, it is the moral hamartia proper, a fault or error where the act is conscious and intentional, but not deliberate. Such are acts committed in anger or passion. Lastly, the word may denote a defect of character, distinct on the one hand from an isolated error or fault, and, on the other, from the vice which has its seat in a depraved will. This use, though rarer, is still Aristotlean. Under this head would be included any human frailty or moral weakness, a flaw of character that is not tainted by a vicious purpose. In our passage there is much to be said in favour of the last sense, as it is here brought into relation with other words of purely moral significance, words moreover which describe not an isolated act, but a more permanent state.[1]

It is to the third kind of hamartia that Hamlet's crisis belongs. It may be noted that Bharata's concept of *śāpa* (curse) and Abhinavagupta's interpretation of the same as *aśakya pratikāra* causing sorrow cover all the categories of hamartia.

However, Hamlet faces adversities to work out the appropriate remedy. He slowly inches his way towards his mission of taking revenge. This is a progress for the generation of *vīra rasa* (heroism), although this *vīra rasa* is clearly associated with *bībhatsa* (aversion) since Hamlet's motive for taking revenge though prompted by the Ghost, is stimulated by his disgust. In his determination to attain his goal of taking revenge, he deliberately assumes a pattern of confusing behaviour (madness in craft) whereas in reality he is extremely conscious of his own self, treading gingerly to attain a steady result. In my view there is no indecisiveness in his character, there is no helplessness in his consciousness. Only that he is not a man of hasty decision as is his counterpart, Othello. He is a man of cool deliberation, showing stability of character. Step by step, he moves ahead. He has an ability to take advantage of even the adversities by transforming them suitably for the success of his purpose. His killing of Polonius is not at all a sign of melancholy or confusion. His comparison of the behaviour of Polonius with that of a rat (III iv: 23) is absolutely justified. He does it consciously although again by his craftiness, he begs apology from Laertes. An ideal example of his ability to transform disadvantages to advantages is his handling of Claudius' letter to the king of England.

Gradually he has been successful in generating *vīra rasa*. He is really a *vīra* (hero) in not murdering Claudius at his prayer as he says that by killing him during such an act, he would rather have immortalized him (sent him to the divine) instead of avenging him:

Hamlet: Now might I do it pat, now is a-praying.
And now I'll do't and so a goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged. That would be scanned
A villain kills my father, and for that
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

(III iii: 73-78)

Obviously with his heroic motive, he suppresses his passion for Ophelia He is not a *dhiralalita* (sensitive) character like Udayana in *Svapnavāsavaduttam* who could sacrifice heroism for the sake of love.[2] A mixture of *dhīra-praśānta* and *dhīrodātta*[3] character, he acknowledges his love for Ophelia that is suppressed for the heroic purpose—"I did love you once" (III i: 116).

Here is a case where *vīra rasa* (heroism) dominates over *śṛìgāra rasa* (love) and though there is a scope for generation of *karuṇa* (sorrow) from *vipralambha śṛìgāra* (love-in-separation), as it is mostly appreciated, in our view, this is only a secondary point of Hamlet's tragic ending, generating finally *karuṇa rasa.* In fact, Hamlet's failure in love is not at all a *peripetia* since he has deliberately suppressed it and this suppression is not at all causing any serious disappointment in Hamlet. As it appears, rather his affair with Ophelia, prior to his father's murder, to his mother's remarriage and to the Ghost's communication was a youthful occasion as it happens to a man before he enters the seriousness of life. But for that matter, it cannot be said that Hamlet is insensitive to love or passion. He certainly loved Ophelia seriously and would have been happy to have her, but

as it happens, he doesn't mind seriously, if he suppresses this passion, ignores and neglects her for the time being. He could have rejected Ophelia meaning it to be a temporary suspension. Hamlet becomes aware of the realities of life only after the murder of his father and the events thereafter have stimulated in him an awareness of the complexities of life, and willingly, without any remorse he has tried to set aside his affair with Ophelia. This is precisely the reason for his disgust with the foolishness of Polonius, especially at a time when he is disturbed by the red signals of the complex cross roads of life which he considers more serious than indulging in youthful passion. Polonius foolishly assumes that Hamlet's involvement with Ophelia has upset his mental equilibrium. This is perhaps the reason for his utter disgust with Polonius. He smells a positive connivance between the king and Polonius. He is disappointed in Ophelia for being a slave to her father's will. Hamlet's apparently offensive behaviour to Ophelia reveals (*dhvani*) his disgust with the total situation. He is unable to express reasonably his love for Ophelia. It is but natural for a serious man of Hamlet's type to be disgusted with the nuptial bed in general as also with the women's race, which could so easily forget the tie with the first husband and readily opt for sharing the bed of the second husband. It is rather Ophelia who is melancholic or gullible in handing over Hamlet's letter to her father and losing patience in waiting for an appropriate opportunity to understand his behaviour. The Ghost is a symbol of the mysteries of life that life is not as it commonly appears; smooth sailing, easy going, lovely and desirable. Life is of course desirable, but desirable with the full knowledge of its complexities and not with any foolish assumptions. The Ghost reveals that (*dhvani*) everything in life cannot be interpreted in terms of empirical experience as Horatio speaks to Hamlet:

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
>
> (I v: 168-169)

Mysteries of life are always covered and to unravel the truth covered under day-to-day experiences one needs a supernatural insight. Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā* calls this supernatural insight a *divyacakṣu* or a divine sight when in spite of Kṛṣṇa's revelation of his universal form, Arjuna fails to realize the truth. Kṛṣṇa then endows him with a supernatural insight for visualizing the truth (*Gītā* xi: 8). In the play, the Ghost functions in a similar manner. It is only Hamlet who perceives the truth whereas others fail. Hamlet is aware of this truth of life but Ophelia fails to cope with him.

Thus, as opposed to the view of S.C. Sengupta, my opinion is that, clearly intertwined with aversion *(bibhatsa)* is heroism *(vīra)* and also figuring prominently is the emotion of sorrow or *karuṇa rasa*. Sengupta argues that while revenge is the purported theme of the play, the core subject is the utter revulsion caused by a mother's unchastity, which is revealed, to us through *dhvani*. Hamlet's disgust for his mother also taints his attitude to others. He is full of derision for the foolish courtier Polonius, disloyal friends like Rosencrantz and Guildenster and the 'waterfly' Osric, to the extent that he equates Ophelia with Gertrude condemning the whole womankind to be unchaste. While denying

Hamlet to be a melancholic cynic, Sengupta feels that Hamlet has nevertheless lost all interest in life when "man delights him not nor woman either." But that doesn't turn him into a melancholic man when he has the Renaissance hero's love for the good things of life, being physically and mentally agile and also full of moral idealism. Sengupta points out that on four occasions Hamlet acts swiftly and decisively. He successfully stages the play to test the truth of the Ghosts words; he kills Polonius; he outwits Claudius and gets Rosencrantz and Guildenstern executed in England and most importantly he slays Claudius at the end. According to Sengupta the killing of Polonius and Claudius are sporadic acts and are outlets for his repressed energies not surprising for a man poisoned by aversion. But the other two exploits of staging the play and foiling the king's plan of sending Hamlet to his death are the results of cool deliberation, and in both these cases his aversion is under a temporary eclipse. In producing the play he becomes his own self, returning to the creativity within him. Again while sailing off to England he escapes from the prison of Denmark and out of the mental state of aversion, which continues to oppress him in his home country.

Sengupta then proceeds to make a running survey of the whole play to discuss the tragedy of Hamlet and its root cause that he claims to be aversion. On encountering the Ghost in the first act Hamlet suddenly decides on assuming madness, which actually hinders his cause of revenge but enables him to express his disgust for life and the world outside. Hamlet's initial suspicion of the Ghost to be a goblin reflects the instability of a mind infected with aversion. In the second act, his aversion has deepened but he wakes up from his stupor and stages the play to test the king's conscience. The staging of the drama transports him to the world of imagination and the prospect of exposing Claudius invigorates him. This act also deals with his relation with Ophelia, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. All three of them only serve to disappoint him further and thus become excitants or determinants *(vibhāvas)* of his mental state of aversion. In the third act his pessimism is intensified which is noticed in his meditation—"To be or not to be" as also in his brutalities to Ophelia. In Act IV Hamlet's disgust with life is leading to a kind of philosophical detachment. For him death seems to be the only reality now and man exists just to be a food for worms. From this viewpoint the destiny of a king and that of a beggar are the same.

Sengupta finally dwells on two significant instances of *dhvani* worth noting in the play. Hamlet's avowal of his deep love for Ophelia being more than forty thousand brothers does not seem to be in tune with his harsh treatment of her in the earlier part of the play. According to Sengupta, the truth is that his berating of Ophelia is the result of his shattered image of ideal love caused by Gertrude and which Ophelia has done nothing to revive. It is because Hamlet loves her so intensely that he wants her to stay away from the corrupting influences of the outside world. Sengupta points out that Hamlet's chastisising of Ophelia is different from the ridicule he pours on Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to whom he speaks with a distance. Another instance of *dhvani* lies in the gravediggers' scene. The clowns play at loggats with the bones of the dead, as they have no feeling of their business.

The question is, points out Sengupta, did Hamlet himself have a feeling of his own business when his behaviour drove Ophelia to madness and death? This is the implicit irony in that scene.

Sengupta concludes that Hamlet is not a play about a mission delayed but about a complex state of mind predominated by aversion. He writes:

> Keeping as far as we can to the Indian system of criticism, we may say that in Hamlet, the predominant state is aversion (*jugupsā*), but it is strengthened and enriched by the mental states, and the total effect is not merely revolting (*bībhatsa*) but tragic—a concept for which there is nothing corresponding in Indian poetics.[4]

But we argue that aversion *(jugupsā)* is not the single predominant emotion nor is *bībhatsa* the only *primary rasa*. (We use the term "emotion" to denote both *rasa* and its corresponding emotion *bhāva*). Closely associated with *bībhatsa* (aversion) is *vīra rasa* or heroism. The Ghost's communication arouses Hamlet's disgust for both the king and the queen and also a firm determination to take revenge upon the king by murdering him, the obvious sign of heroism in Hamlet. And *karuṇa rasa* or sorrow is unmistakably another central emotion. Sengupta's idea that the concept of tragedy is alien to the Indian dramatic tradition is undoubtedly true, but the absence of this concept in Indian tradition is not due to any aesthetic inadequacy, rather, significantly, due to the Indian worldview that, although suffering is an inevitable part of human life, the end is absolute bliss, that is, the very origin of life as a whole. The Upaniṣadic voice that "Life as a whole emerges from bliss, subsists in bliss and finally immerses into bliss" is the authority here.[5] Death is therefore not a tragedy, particularly, the death of a hero in the battlefield leads to an elevated heavenly life. As the *Gītā* says:

> Slain [in the battle-field], you will obtain heaven;
> Victorious you will enjoy the earth [worldly happiness].
>
> (II: 37)

So, Hamlet, being slain in battle, is a real hero in the Sanskrit sense of the term *vīra* (hero). Hamlet's death is certainly not caused due to any instability or weakness of character he suffers from. Like a true *vīra* he is firm upon his decision and faces adversities like a true *vīra* should face, finally accomplishing his mission of killing the king. His death can be compared with the Indian concept of *vīragati*, i.e., the end of a true hero.

In the case of Hamlet, it is a dual victory. He doesn't elevate his enemy (Claudius) to get a divine status by slaying him at his prayer. At the right time he kills the king and takes appropriate revenge. And he is himself elevated to a higher kind of life—the life in death by being himself slain. He doesn't repent although Laertes repents and in the confession and repentance of Laertes, Hamlet's *vīragati* is doubly asserted. Hamlet's success is therefore a double one—because he kills his enemy and regains the friendship of Laertes who regrets that being misguided by the villain, he has killed Hamlet. As Abhinavagupta writes, "heroism is the nature of persons with good qualities, enthusiasm

of these good people is always delightful."[6] He further observes that heroism is the effect of one's physical strength and commitment to moral principles such as control of sense organs and proper consideration of the legal instructions. Abhinavagupta cites the examples of Rāma (in the epic *Rāmāyaṇa)* and Udayana (in *Svapnavāsavadattam*[7]) who had all these qualities in abundance. By virtue of their goodness they were also able to earn the goodwill and support of the public bureaucrats as well as politicians. They had great patience, tolerance, ability for sacrifice of the coveted things, attaining the goal of life and also appropriate skill for fighting in the battlefield. Considering these factors, Hamlet would be the most befitting character of this category. The best example for his control of sense organs is his suspension of his attachment or passion for Ophelia. At the same time, his patience for waiting for a proper occasion and opportunity to slay the king and his decision not to do it at his prayer are all coming under the qualities of a character of heroism that Abhinavagupta and Bharata[8] decide.

The *vīra rasa* displayed in a *dhīroddhata* (the brave and haughty) character like Bhīma in *Veṇīsaṁhāra* can be cited here. The play *Veṇīsaṁhāra* by Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa (7th century A.D.), deals with the conflict for kingship between the two royal families of Hastināpur. In the first group are the Pāṇḍavas—Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. The other group who are the cousins of the Pāṇḍavas are called the Kauravas. They are a hundred brothers in all, the eldest being Duryodhana. Though Yudhiṣṭhira is crowned as the king of Hastināpur, Duryodhana considers himself to be the rightful heir. So he challenges Yudhiṣṭhira for a game of dice for which the latter has a passion. Using deceit, Duryodhana constantly defeats him in every round. In this bait, Yudhiṣṭhira starts losing all his property and his entire kingdom. Continuing to be goaded by Duryodhana's mocking challenges, he starts baiting his younger brothers, one after the other and finally his wife, Draupadī. This was Duryodhana's trump card as he had previously desired to marry Draupadī but had been rejected by her. In order to salvage his bruised ego, he takes up this opportunity to publicly humiliate Draupadī. So he orders his younger brother, who is the strongest among the Kauravas to fetch Draupadī from the inner chambers of the palace. Not taking heed of Draupadī's pleadings, he drags her by the hair from her chamber. Her long braid falls loose while she is being dragged. At Duryodhana's command, Duḥśāsana tries to undress her in the presence of others, but fails to do so due to Lord Kṛṣṇa's benevolence on Draupadī. Not being able to swallow this humiliation, Draupadī pledges never to braid her hair again until it is washed with Duḥśāsana's blood. Bhīma is the one most affected by this sight and swears to take revenge on Duḥśāsana for this vile deed.

The Pāṇḍavas are exiled for thirteen years at Duryodhana's command, after which they are supposed to get back their kingdom. But Duryodhana does not keep his promise and challenges them for a war. So a war is inevitable, which is called the battle of the *Mahābhārata*. In this historic event, Bhīma combats with Duḥśāsana who are considered equals in strength and mace fighting. After a long struggle Bhīma finally succeeds in

slaying Duḥśāsana. In order to keep his vow, he carries Duḥśāsana's blood and smears it on Draupadī's hair. Being thus pacified, Draupadī finally braids her hair. The agony of the Kauravas causes *karuṇa rasa* (sorrow).

Bhīma's bravery and heroism have been much glorified by Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa in this drama. It was only Bhīma who had the courage to challenge Duḥśāsana who had no match and was considered invincible till then. Having captured Duḥśāsana he challenged all the heroes of the Kauravas to save Duḥśāsana from his clutch. This challenge that nobody is able to meet is expressive of *vīra rasa* par excellence. In the final scene of Hamlet, although this kind of explosive heroism is not displayed, Hamlet's skilful operation in hitting Laertes as also the king is undoubtedly an ideal display of *vīra rasa*. But *vīra rasa* in its completeness is the absolute victory of the hero where he kills the enemy and remains invincible. Hamlet being slain in the drama concerned, the Sanskrit *vīra rasa* is not accomplished ideally. This therefore results in *karuṇa rasa*. The situation can be fruitfully compared with the slaying of Abhimanyu in the battle of the *Mahābhārata*. Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, though only sixteen, was a skilled fighter as he had learnt the skill of the Chakravyuha (an infantry circle formed like a wheel) from his maternal uncle, Lord Kṛṣṇa who had been narrating this skill to his sister *Subhadrā*, while Abhimanyu was in her womb. Abhimanyu, having killed several heroes in the great battle, is killed treacherously the way not permitted by the laws of war, i.e., one warrior attacked by seven warriors at a time. Fighthing valiantly till his last breath he finally succumbs to the onslaught of his enemies. This display is undoubtedly heroic but causes *karuṇa* (sorrow) because of the death of the hero. The *Bhagavad Gītā* says that a warrior doesn't die in the battlefield but is rather slain there having put up a valiant fight, and gets promoted to heaven (*Gītā* ii: 32, 37). Nevertheless from an aesthetic point of view, this death doesn't save the occasion from pathos, particularly when a righteous warrior having killed several villains is finally himself slain, the result being the sorrow of the warrior's own kinsmen and the onlookers or public. In this instance, instead of *vīra rasa*, it is *karuṇa*, which is finally stimulated. So also is the case of Hamlet. Hamlet kills the real villain, the king, and another righteous man Laertes behaving like a villain at the instigation of the real villain. But his own death predominates over *vīra rasa* and results finally in *karuṇa*. Abhinavagupta writes that when "the adverse situation of a righteous man is seen or heard, it produces *karuṇa rasa*."[9] This adverse situation is explained as loss of wealth.... ending even in death. Thus the situation of Hamlet can appropriately be appreciated as a *karuṇa rasa, vīra rasa* being hampered by his death. As the ending of each play is crucial for a final impression it wouldn't be contradictory to select *karuṇa rasa* to be the final predominating emotion.

The demerit of *Hamlet* in generating *rasa* is its mixing of several emotions in such a complex form that it puts the viewer in confusion as to the predominance of a particular emotion. There are fear, disgust, courage, and sorrow. Fear, though a secondary emotion in the play appears too frequently. A secondary emotion according to the *rasa* theorists should not gain much prominence. The other three *rasas* of disgust, courage and sorrow

are produced in equal measures. So, the question as regards the predominance of one single emotion running throughout the play as stressed by the Sanskrit critics is open for debate. It is not a tragedy of a plain tragic structure. In the confusion of *bībhatsa* (disgust), *vīra* (heroism) and *karuṇa* (sorrow), although *karuṇa* finally prevails, till the end, the spectator is put in confusion, as to the predominance of the *rasa* it purports to present.

II

Hamlet and the *Dhvani* Theory

Having thus considered the *rasa* structure of *Hamlet*, we proceed to analyse the *dhvani* structure of the play. Since the play ends in the experience of sorrow, it is *karuṇa rasa* which dominates it, owing to the death of the hero in the final scene. Nevertheless the second dominating *rasa, vīra* has played its role most effectively. *Hamlet's* heroism excels throughout and though *karuṇa* is generated by his death it is *vīra*, which is sustained throughout, and the death of Hamlet rather elevates his heroism. This bright side of Hamlet in all respects of life is already revealed in Act I scene ii: 66-67. While the king apprehends a feeling of melancholy and weakness in Hamlet, the hero is bold enough to forecast his bright heroism:

King Claudius: How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Hamlet: Not so, my lord, I am too much I' th' sun.

Hamlet's confidence that he has no clouds around him, rather he is too much under the sun is a clear *dhvani* expression sufficiently meaningful for the audience that the aim and objective of the hero are quite clear. This technique of *dhvani* can be compared with the *dhvani* structure of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. After cursing the hunter who had shot down the crane, sage Vālmīki was still not relieved. The experience of sorrow loomed heavily upon him for quite a long time, until he was finally advised by the divine sage Nārada to compose a poem on Śrī Rāmachandra, the incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. Vālmīki wrote a poem the principal *rasa* of which was *karuṇa*, though it was associated with *vīra* due to the heroic adventures of the main character, Śrī Rāma. The event and the curse itself serve as a *dhvani* for the dominating *rasa* of the poem that the poet Vālmīki had to compose. Similarly in Hamlet, the very speeches quoted above serve as a *dhvani* for the whole of the play. These two speeches in their tertiary or trancendental meaning or *dhvani* reveal that Hamlet is extremely self-conscious or aware, wise, confident and optimistic about his own existence and the course of action that he takes up for the future. But the king with his arrogance, hypocrisy and criminality is unable to understand him properly. Hamlet remains invincible throughout the play. In fact he suffers no defeat. *Karuṇa* arises due to the death of the hero that he has not deserved.

The second point of *dhvani* is Hamlet's encounter with the Ghost. In Act I scene v: line.4, Hamlet pities the Ghost, but the situation demands that he should actually pity his own self and this is the meaning, when the Ghost answers, "Pity me not...."

Ghost: ...I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.

(I. v: 15-20)

This speech of the Ghost is an example of *dhvani* for the dominating *vīra rasa* running through the whole play. The Ghost encourages Hamlet as Lord Kṛṣṇa encourages Arjuna in the battlefield of the *Mahābhārata*. It is Hamlet's conscience and finally his guru to whom Hamlet surrenders as Arjuna surrenders to Lord Kṛṣṇa uttering the words "O Lord Kṛṣṇa, I am your disciple and you instruct me who has surrendered completely to you" (*Gītā* ii: 7). The situation also reveals that human life is a battlefield and that each and every man is a hero to overcome the obstacles and adversities even at the cost of his life. He who does this always wins the battle either by dying or by surviving. Both ways he is a winner and a hero. In his heroic pattern of life, love appears only as a subsidiary one. In the heroic epics, it is love, which stimulates heroism. But in a drama where the essentials of life are represented, where the realities of human life are to be displayed, love is to be dominated over by the heroic purposes of life. It is not that a hero has no passion or love and that he is insensitive to love, but the truth is that for a hero fighting in the battlefield of life, love appears to be a secondary emotion, heroism being primary in his character. Thus, the realistic epic of the *Mahābhārata* poses love as a secondary emotion, heroism being the primary. And Lord Kṛṣṇa pleads for this domination of heroism in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. A man is to be active all through, never inactive, irrespective of his success or failure in life. Lord Kṛṣṇa specifies the qualities of a *sāttvic kartā* or that an ideal hero (doer) is always free from attachment to the result of his action, indifferent to success and to failure, without any sense of arrogance and always with patience and enthusiasm (*Gītā* xviii: 26). Thus Hamlet's main aim is to accomplish the action and like the true disciple of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he never suffers from inertia although only apparently he criticizes himself in the two soliloquies quoted earlier.

A hero's suspension of the passion of love for the sake of his heroic achievement is revealed in his attitude to Ophelia. Polonius' conjecture that Hamlet is mad in love is a *dhvani* of his own insanity only. When he utters, "that he is mad,'t is true, 'tis true'tis pity; And pity 'tis'tis true," (II ii: 98-99) the audience is clearly pitying Polonius himself. The irony of Polonius' speech is only applicable to himself, not to Hamlet at all. Polonius' pitiful situation is revealed in several speeches between Hamlet and Polonius (II ii: 182-183). For example:

Hamlet: For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good
kissing carrion--have you a daughter?

The primary or superficial (denotational) meaning of this speech is carrion, a carcass. The secondary meaning referred to *(lakṣhyārtha)* is live flesh and especially flesh contemptuously regarded as available for sexual pleasure. The third or tertiary meaning (*dhvani*) means Ophelia and what may happen to her, i.e., if Ophelia's love is going to be fruitless. And perhaps also Shakespeare wants to say that Ophelia will end up as a carcass by dying ultimately:

Hamlet: Let her not walk I'th' sun. Conception is a blessing,
but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

(II ii: 185-186)

Further in Hamlet's speech he asks Ophelia to be kept out of the sun in its literal (primary) sense. In its secondary meaning, *lakṣyārtha*, she is to be kept out of public view and the third meaning or *dhvani* is that Ophelia is to be kept away from Hamlet. In the famous soliloquy, "To be or not to be..." Hamlet prefers suffering to death implying his preference to heroism and suffering of any kind whatsoever it may be—obviously suffering even due to reflection of love, "The pangs of disprized love..." (III i: 74).

Finally coming to his encounter with Ophelia, his apparent misbehaviour with her is an ambivalent gesture implying his disgust with his mother as representing the whole race of women including Ophelia. His address to Ophelia embedded with harsh and offensive abuses like "Get thee to a nunnery" (III i: 122-130) etc. has been interpreted variously by the critics. It certainly puts the audience to a confusion regarding the sincerity of Hamlet's love for Ophelia, who takes his offensive behaviour literally and feels terribly hurt and disappointed, a situation which finally leads her to suicide. Thomas S. Eliot's famous objection that Shakespeare was unable to find a proper objective correlative for an expression of disgust has been analysed by Ananta C. Sukla in a strong defensive argument.[10] He thinks that Hamlet's unpalatable behaviour with Ophelia is a category of *rasa-dhvani*, which reveals his love for her.[11] His behaviour or *anubhāva* actually reveals (*dhvani*) his love for Ophelia. Hamlet is no doubt filled with an utter disgust for women in general. He has also expressed this in his behaviour with Gertrude, but the difference is that; his *anubhāva* is literal *(abhidhā)* in the case of Gertrude in such instances like:

Hamlet: Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty...

(III iv: 40)

And:

Hamlet: Frailty, thy name is woman...

(I ii: 146)

Contrastingly his behaviour with Ophelia is of a *dhvani* category. Sukla suggests that the harsh and offensive words used by Hamlet for Ophelia reveal his love for her, rather than his disgust with her. Hamlet is not disgusted with Ophelia directly as he is with Gertrude. Since he is constrained in expressing his agony and anguish before everybody other than his mother, he tacitly accepts Ophelia as the only other person before whom he should

express himself. Thus, concludes Sukla, this apparent misbehaviour with Ophelia reveals his love for her and *śṛṅgāra rasa* (love) is revealed by this *dhvani* technique. This is an instance of *rasa-dhvani*. Sukla gives the simplest example of a similar situation from common life. Children's anger and defiance with the mother are only indicative of their love for her and not real anger or disgust. It is only with a person of one's sincere love and intimacy that one expresses one's anguish. Following Sukla's line of thought one can argue that when Hamlet fails to accept Gertrude who is the right person before whom he could express his agony, since she is the culprit herself in joining hands with his father's murderer, it is impossible on his part to accept her as an intimate partner for sharing his grief. The only alternative partner is obviously Ophelia. Hamlet's behaviour being poetically most appropriate, it is Ophelia's lack of sensibility that she fails to appreciate Hamlet's predicament. However, Hamlet's love for Ophelia is beyond any doubt. And thus she speaks, "Fare you well, my dove" (IV v: 166). Dove (perhaps referring to Hamlet) being the symbol of the Holy Spirit is the *dhvani* expression for the sacredness of love, a case of *dhvani* based on *lakṣaṇā* (metaphor).

A closely parallel idea is to be found in Peter Alexander's *Shakespeare's Life and Art* where he quotes Charles Lamb's justification of Hamlet's apparent cruelty to the innocent Ophelia:

> The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Hamlet and Ophelia, there is a stock of supererogarory love, (if I may venture to use the expression) which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of temporary alienation.[12]

Alexander again quotes Samuel Taylor Coleridge who echoes a similar thought when he says that "he [Hamlet] at last must need express his love's excess with words of unmeant bitterness."[13]

After Ophelia's sorrowful death Hamlet's intuitive speech is of ironical strength:

> Hamlet: We defy augury. There's a special providence in
> the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come. If it be not
> to come, it will be now. If it be not now, yet it will come. The
> readiness is all. Since no man, has aught of what he leaves,
> what is't to leave betimes?
>
> (V ii: 157-161)

The hero is prepared for any eventuality. The realization and conviction of Hamlet can be compared to Kṛṣṇa's instructions that a hero should never fear death as fighting against evil is the noblest deed of a hero; the phenomenal success and failure are all the same. A heroic death is as good as a heavenly existence. Therefore a hero should fight for the sake of fighting.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the eventual outcome of the dramatic spectacle is *rasa*. The *rasa* produced can be dependent on several factors. One means of producing *rasa* is *dhvani*, but *dhvani* appeals only to a higher sensibility and may be lost to some. While being a powerful potent in producing *rasa*, *dhvani* may not necessarily create the desired effect as it may fail to reach all levels of the audience. If *dhvani* remains unrevealed in the dialogues, the resulting *rasa* may be totally different from the same dialogue where *dhvani* gets revealed. So *dhvani* might play a vital role in determining the *rasa* produced. Much also depends on the mind conditioning and thought process of the viewers. This is where the *Bhagavad Gītā* comes in playing a relatively important role in creating *rasa* in the (Indian) audience. The *Gītā* interpretation is not a dramaturgical interpretation but might be relevant in determining the nature of the *rasa* produced. Like the *Bhagavad Gītā* there could be numerous other influencing factors depending on the socio-cultural background of an individual. Again, the *rasa* produced could vary from individual to individual depending on his or her personal experience and mode of thinking. So while it is possible sometimes to determine and generalise the *rasas*, in many cases they could widely differ depending on one's individual character, perspective and socio-cultural environment.

Notes and References

[1] S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, 317-318.

[2] *Svapnavāsavadattam* or The *Vision of Vāsavadattā* is the most respected of Bhāṣa's (2nd century B.C ?.) plays. It tells of king Udayana, a ruler who is pressured by his minister of state to marry the daughter of a powerful ruler in order to strengthen his reign and protect his kingdom. The king however, is too devoted to his wife to consider such a marriage. But the queen is ready to sacrifice her happiness to save the kingdom.

[3] Sanskrit Poetics gives us altogether forty-eight subdivisions of the hero which can be rearranged into four types viz. (i) the brave and the high spirited (*dhirodatta*) (ii) the brave and haughty (*dhirodhata*) (iii) the brave and sportive (*dhiralalita*) (iv) the brave and serene (*dhira-prasanta*).

[4] S. C. Sengupta, *Aspects of Shakespearian Tragedy*, 158.

[5] *Taittriya Upaniṣad*, section 6: *Upaniṣad Anka*, Kalyan Magazine, vol. 23, 354.

[6] Visheshwara Siddhanta Siromani, trans., *Abhinavabhāratī*, 593-596.

[7] *Svapnavāsavadattam* or The *Vision of Vāsavadattā* is the most respected of Bhasa's (2nd century B.C.?) plays. It tells of king Udayana, a ruler who is pressured by his minister of state to marry the daughter of a powerful ruler in order to strengthen his reign and protect his kingdom. The king however, is too devoted to his wife to consider such a marriage. But the queen ready to sacrifice her happiness to save the kingdom, stages her death in a palace fire, then secretly returns to wait upon the new queen and be near her husband.

[8] Abhinavagupta is the commentator of Bharata's *Nāṭyśāstra*.

[9] Visheshwara Siddhanta Siromani, trans., *Abhinavabhāratī*, 578-582.

[10] T.S Eliot "Hamlet and his Problems," *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*, 95-103.

[11] A.C. Sukla, "Theory of Impersonal Art," *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics*.

69-79

[12] Charles Lamb, *On the Tragedies of Shakespeare, n.p.*, as quoted in Peter Alexander, *Shakespeare's Life and Art*, 154-155.

[13] As quoted in Peter Alexander, *Shakespeare's Life and Art*, 155.

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A Systematic and Discrete View of Aesthetics in Chess

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Introduction

Chess is a very old but popular board game for two players. There are many variants played all over the world including Shogi (Japan) and Xiangqi (China) but the most widely recognized is known as Western or international chess. Often regarded as both a sport and an art, chess is well known for its aesthetic qualities. Most people would agree that there is certain artistry to chess and this can be found primarily in the world of chess problem composition (Ravilious, 1994). However, chess problem compositions have their own conventions, which include other factors besides aesthetics. Most of the time, aesthetics in compositions is simply assumed to be synergetic of certain conventions or based purely on taste. (Wilson, 1978; Troyer, 1983)

This fact does not preclude aesthetics from regular over-the-board (OTB) games, however. Some people contend that since chess is primarily a game or sport where the main objective is to win, it cannot be considered an art form but even they concede to the presence of aesthetics at least within the domain of composed problems (Lord, 1985). Nevertheless, aesthetics outside that domain has been verified experimentally (Margulies, 1977) and also acknowledged by master players (Lasker, 1947), (Kasparov, 1987), (Levitt and Friedgood, 1995). So the question that remains is what exactly done we mean by aesthetics in chess? This paper elucidates some of the discrete principles of aesthetics that are not exclusive to chess problem composition or OTB games but are native to chess itself, as a whole. Clear definition of aesthetics is important to the development of computational models of aesthetics (Walls, 1997), (Iqbal1, 2006) that contribute to the field of artificial intelligence and also because similar parameters have been defined in even less amenable domains such music (McClain, 2003), (Golub 2000), art (Machado, 1998) and even literature (Bringsjorf, 1998); so what more chess which happens to be a zero-sum perfect information game with precise rules in a finite domain?

This paper is divided into 4 sections. The first covers chess problem composition and its conventions, including the idea of aesthetics in problems. Section 2 explores the principles of beauty in regular chess games. Also included is a discussion on the aesthetics of brilliant games. Section 3 bridges both problems and over-the-board games with the general principles of aesthetics that apply to both, hence providing a clear set of ideas to

work with when addressing the question of aesthetics in chess, as a whole. Finally, the conclusion sums up the basic ideas of this paper.

1. Chess Problem Composition

Chess problem composition is the primary domain in chess where it gets its reputation of being an art form albeit a minor one (Humble, 1993). That distinction in turn naturally implies the presence of aesthetics or beauty. Problem composition dates back to over a thousand years but the foundation of problems today was established only about 150 years ago. Problems that use the same pieces as the regular game are termed orthodox and this is the kind I wish to discuss here. There are other types such as fairy chess that include unconventional pieces, studies which are mostly of the endgame variety where white is to win or draw but not force checkmate, selfmates in which white forces black to deliver mate and helpmates where black and white cooperate to achieve checkmate for white (McDowell, 2005). All varieties of chess composition pertaining to whatever variant of chess have aesthetic qualities but they are not exactly the same or even close in some cases because the rules differ. This is why I wish to discuss specifically orthodox problems, in particular the direct-mate variety, which covers the majority of problem compositions and is similar in every way to the widely played version of international chess as we know it.

Problem competitions are often held where both exclusive composers and even highly rated players compete to create the best compositions. Grandmaster John Nunn and International Master David Friedgood are examples of professional players who are also great problem composers. Not very many professional players are also composers, though. This is usually because they focus on either the competitive aspect of the game or the artistic one and not both, at least not at the same point in their careers. It is theoretically for a chess composition to occur in a real game but unlikely because composers often place the pieces so strategically that the theme or idea they wish to illustrate can be demonstrated well. The basic idea behind a chess problem is that it typically challenges the solver to find a checkmate within a specific number of moves against any defense (Howard, 1967). So how are chess compositions judged? Is it purely based on subjective beauty? There is no fixed set of items judges must look at in a problem but Howard provides a rather comprehensive set of guidelines, perfectly valid even today, in the following. A chess problem should:

1. illustrate some particular powers of the chessmen in their interaction with one another
2. possess a solution that is difficult rather than easy
3. contain no unnecessary moves to illustrate a theme
4. contain more variety in the defenses available to the opposing side (black) but they must be related to the thematic content of the problem
5. possess complexity of variations
6. have white move first and mate black
7. have a starting position that absolutely must be possible to achieve in a real game, however improbable

8. contain only pieces present on the board at the beginning of the game, i.e., no more than 1 queen, 2 rooks, 2 bishops (of opposite colour squares), 2 knights and naturally 8 pawns however, pawns may be promoted to any piece in the actual solution
9. not allow en passant moves unless they take place as legitimate moves in the solution or have them functioning as a key (the first move) unless retrograde analysis shows black's last move to permit it
10. avoid castling moves because it cannot be proved legal
11. have a key move that appears aimless or inconspicuous, i.e., violates chess heuristics meaning that strong moves (checking, captures, limiting the mobility of black etc.) are undesirable.
12. possess more moves in the solution that are also of the 'quiet' type
13. possess only one unique key move that will solve the problem, otherwise it is 'cooked' (invalidated)
14. have a definite solution in the stipulated number of moves immune to any unexpected defenses by black
15. preferably not contain duals or triples (more than one valid continuation after any of black's replies) but this cannot be entirely elimated from compositions so the issue is usually explored in greater detail and may vary depending on the judge
16. feature economy, i.e., the relation between the number of men used and the results obtained (based on complexity or variety in lines of play); a problem is considered uneconomically when the same result could be obtained with fewer men or less powerful ones so a piece should be made to use as much of its power as possible with more emphasis given to the white forces in this respect
17. create a deceptive setting for the solver (makes it look like a different theme is at play) so to lend more satisfaction when the real solution is discovered
18. not be 'dressed' (placing unnecessary pieces to mimic the conditions of a real game) which used to be the practice of earlier composers but today interferes with the concept of economy
19. have the chessmen spaced over the entire board rather than just in one section as too many pieces close to each other depict clutter
20. avoid using too many pawns, especially mutually blocking white and black ones; doubled and tripled pawns are objectionable, except when used thematically
21. not place pieces in 'unnatural' positions for a skilled composer endeavors to keep his positions from appearing this way

These guidelines and rules are confirmed and reiterated in other sources dealing with problem compositions as well (Albrecth, 1993), (Morse, 1995) and give the layman quite a good idea about what constitutes a good or even acceptable direct-mate orthodox chess problem. It should be clear however that not all of the things listed above pertain to aesthetics or beauty in chess in any universal sense. Many (e.g. 2, 4-10, 15, 20, 21) are merely conventions, sensible as they may be, established by earlier composers (known as

the 'Old School') and those who followed and improved on them. The most beautiful problem (from anyone's point of view) does not necessarily win composition tournaments nor is it even regarded as a good example. This is why evaluating problems purely from an aesthetic viewpoint is an issue for both composers and judges. Wilson lists the items judges generally look at (subjectively) when deciding on a composition if only from an aesthetic standpoint, notably:

1. quality of the key move and where it points
2. preferred themes
3. originality of the idea
4. detrimental effect of a bad dual (if it exists)
5. detrimental effect of unused major pieces in the solution
6. permission of checking moves as keys and if so, to what extent
7. optional penalization of symmetry on the board

He also adds that based on 'rules' like this, judges often completely disagree with each other about which composition should win. Anyone can see that while items 1 through 7 above can relate to aesthetics in some composition-related way, there is nothing there that treats the concept of aesthetics in chess as stemming from anything more than purely subjective taste and personal knowledge, however inadequate that may be. This is the perception of many problem composers and even players. They really have little idea how to approach the element of aesthetics in any way other than being completely arbitrary about it (as conventional wisdom dictates) or based on their personal taste and perhaps even mood, at the time. This may be why many of the conventions mentioned by Howard are in fact quite objective and provide some rational basis for composing and eventually judging good problems. These conventions are considered objective because they are quantifiable to an extent (Fainshtein, F. and HaCohen-Kerner, Y, 2006) without the involvement of personal taste.

Wilson proposed a method of evaluating chess problems using reference tables by attributing integer values to strategies like checks, blocks, castling and also to individual themes in the hope of providing a fair basis for comparing one composed chess problem to another (Wilson 1969). This was intended to provide a more objective method for evaluating chess problems. The method produced a numeric score for individual chess problems that could be used to compare one against another. It was even reasonably accurate by some standards. However, his proposal to use the method to replace human judges in chess problem composition contests was universally rejected (Grand 1986) and probably because it failed to account for the aesthetic aspect of problems that cannot be accounted for as easily or was just assumed to be synergetic of the limited conventions and things he did account for.

One might now be tempted to ask how many things there are to consider in a chess problem. We know that conventions are important and so is aesthetics. Everything else most likely falls under one of these two. For example, Morse states that problems have 'art' and 'puzzle' elements. The former refers to aesthetics and the latter, difficulty (Morse,

1995). Troyer, in talking about the aesthetic aspect of chess problems mentions even the history behind a problem and how that might contribute to its appreciation (Troyer, 1983). Nonetheless, he is referring to the aesthetic component pertaining to problems. Any systematic approach to problem composition or evaluation can only take into account the objective and quantifiable aspects and not aesthetics because we have yet to define it ourselves. Does this mean that aesthetics in a given domain is beyond explicit or even reasonable definition? Once again conventional wisdom will tell us it probably is but unfortunately we cannot rely on conventional wisdom very much. I will explain more about this in the following section.

Aesthetics, we must remember, is also an element in over-the-board games where most conventions of problem composition do not apply even though the rules of the game are exactly the same. In fact, the rules of chess have not really changed in over 500 years with the last major introduction being the en passant pawn move in the 15th century that allows a pawn on the fifth rank to capture an enemy pawn moving two squares on an adjoining file as if it had only moved one square (Hoopers and Whyld, 1996). This is why some games from distant history can be appreciated aesthetically even today for the rules have not changed.

In this section we have seen the many conventions of chess problem composition and how some of them relate to aesthetics. In my opinion, it is wrong to conflate conventions that are typically objective (e.g. no duals, no dressing of the board etc.) with aesthetics that is rather subjective. In fact, since aesthetics has no explicit definition in chess composition, it is often assumed to arise synergitically from the amalgam of conventions mixed with dash of personal taste. This need not be the case since aesthetics has been more accurately defined in OTB games. Their relation to problem composition is also clear given that the rules of the game are the same in both cases. So, it stands to reason that aesthetics exists in both regular chess games and problems in a way that bridges the two. It can be argued that aesthetic perception in compositions might differ from that in real games but this is due to the aforementioned conflation of problem conventions and aesthetics. There is nothing much about beauty in chess itself (pertaining to the common ground between problems and regular games) that somehow requires aesthetics in either to be redefined. No matter how you slice it, both are still very much the game of chess and abide by the same rules so blurring the concept aesthetics that apply to both is unnecessary.

2. Principles of Beauty in Regular Games

When referring to aesthetics in chess, people are usually talking about something that appeals to them in a certain way. It is true that this can be different from person to person but there are things about the rules of chess that dictate one should have reasonable basis before saying something about the game is beautiful. Beauty in chess as it turns out, is not wholly in the eye of the beholder. For example, the shape and size of the chess pieces (or even the hand that moves it) are irrelevant and not deemed worthy of being called beautiful in a way that relates to the game itself. Stuart Margulies, a psychologist, in an

attempt to understand aesthetic principles in other more amorphous areas, derived 8 principles of aesthetics in chess from the judgement of expert chess players. The principles of beauty are as follows:

1. successfully violate heuristics
2. use the weakest piece possible
3. use all of the piece's power
4. give more aesthetic weight to critical pieces
5. use one giant piece in place of several minor pieces
6. employ chess themes
7. avoid bland stereotypy
8. neither strangeness nor difficulty produces beauty (i.e. wildly improbable positions and difficult ones do not lead to judgements of beauty)

His results have nothing to do with chess problem composition in particular and is referring strictly to beauty or aesthetics in chess. This means that it pertains to aesthetics of over-the-board games and problem composition. Perhaps even to any other form of the game that applies exactly the same rules. His research only further confirms what chess problem composers and professional players have been saying for a long time about beauty in the game (Lionnais, 1951), (Osborne, 1964), (Bronstein, 1983). Most of these principles exist in some form or other in problem conventions but they also apply wholly to real games.

Successful violation of heuristics has been explained but to clarify even further, it means anything that goes against traditional chess practices of good play (e.g. keep your king safe, protect your chessmen, capture enemy material etc.) yet results in an achievement of some kind. The 2nd principle places emphasis on using a weaker piece over a more powerful one either in the move sequence. It is considered more beautiful for example, to checkmate using a knight than a queen since the latter has a piece value 3 times the former yet achieves the same goal. Piece values (Q = 9, R = 5, B = 3, N = 3, P = 1) were set by Claude Shannon in his seminal paper on programming a computer to play chess and have been widely accepted today as a means of comparing material value on the chessboard (Shannon, 1950). Margulies' 3rd principle refers to the power of each piece such as the ability to traverse the entire board in a single move. The power of a piece relates directly to the number of squares it controls (Euwe, 1982).

In principle 4, more aesthetic weight is ascribed to critical pieces. This refers to the piece that is essential to the combination played. The one that checkmates the enemy king is usually critical so aesthetic considerations are severely affected should this piece hypothetically be replaced with a different one. The 5th principle of using a giant piece in place of minor ones used imaginary pieces to illustrate the concept of power utilization on the board. It is considered more aesthetic to have one piece do the job of many. The 6th principle of employing chess themes is very broad and covers many themes in chess such as the fork, pin and discovered attack. Chess problems employ all the themes used in OTB chess but also include more exotic ones (e.g. Novotny, Bristol etc.) that are less common in regular games. Principle 7 suggests that common positions are less beautiful than rare ones. This relates to the concept of originality. Finally, principle 8 states that strange

positions (awkward in a sense) or difficult ones, are not necessarily beautiful. In compositions, difficulty is valued so this is a specific example of a problem convention that cannot be taken as a prerequisite to aesthetics in chess as a whole.

Brilliancy prizes are awarded to certain games (usually on the grounds of a particular move combination in the game) at some chess tournaments based on principles that are very similar to those just discussed (Damsky, 2002). Damsky states that brilliance-another term often used when referring to aesthetics or beauty in chess-in tournament games involves expediency, disguise, sacrifice, correctness, preparation (when referring to a complete game rather than a particular combination), paradox and originality.

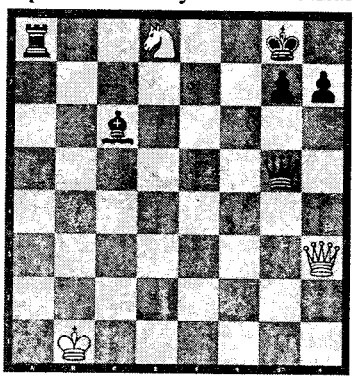
Expediency implies effectiveness in the sense that the move achieves something tangible like a checkmate, decisive material gain or forcing a draw in a seemingly lost position. Disguise suggests a violation of heuristics because the key move played (for a particular combination, usually) should not lend itself to the solution immediately. It is not something that appears obvious, so to speak. Sacrifices, especially significant ones, are often treasured because in real games it is not something players seriously consider unless there is some tangible benefit within a calculable distance ahead. They are also a form of heuristic violation and paradoxical in nature. Correctness is essential because the move sequence should not have succeeded due to chance or unsound play by the opponent. Just like in chess problems, a move sequence is considered beautiful if and only if there is no way the opponent could have successfully defended against it and no way the objective could have been achieved more quickly through a different maneuver. Amateur players are often quite pleased with themselves after executing what they think is a fantastic combination during a game but upon closer analysis, particularly with the aid of computers, it is very common that they realize it could have been done sooner or better in some way if not that the opponent simply missed a viable defense to their attack.

Preparation is a term that refers to when a beautiful move sequence in a certain position of the game was achieved in great part due to the strategic play preceding it that lead to the favourable arrangement of pieces in said position. Under these circumstances, the whole game may be considered beautiful and awarded a brilliancy prize. In most cases however, brilliancy can be pinned down to a particular move sequence or combination that shines in a game. Paradoxes as mentioned earlier, are not confined to sacrifices. They also include anything that goes against preconceived notions in chess. For example, it is taught in chess that you should always keep your king safe. However, there are positions where the king if turned into an attacking piece moving right through the centre of the board, might actually force checkmate. The concept of paradoxes in chess is explored in some detail by Levitt and Friedgood in their book on 'spectacular' chess (Levitt and Friedgood, 1996). Finally, we have originality. This is hard to objectively ascertain because it refers to something the observer has not seen before and relies on his experience. In some ways it can be tied to the concept of rarity but not strangeness.

There are also other aspects of beauty in chess that have been described by master players based on their experience with the game. Lasker wrote of achievement, which is actually a very fundamental principle of beauty in chess (Lasker, 1947). Whether we are talking about beauty in regular games, brilliancy prizes or even problem composition,

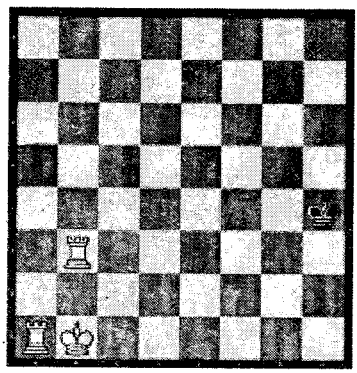
unsound play is unforgivable aesthetically. Another important aesthetic element that applies to regular games is the principle of economy (Levitt and Friedgood, 1995), (Humble, 1993), (Troyer, 1983). It is more or less equivalent to its counterpart in problem composition. Whilst it is understandable that composed problems have an advantage here since the composer can make certain no stray pieces are on the board, for OTB games it is still considered aesthetic-perhaps even more so given the inherent lack of control over what happens-when a checkmate occurs using all available resources as efficiently as possible. Amateur games for example, will often feature superfluous material used to checkmate (e.g., a queen and two rooks) due to the players' lack of skill whereas master games tend to achieve mate with more finesse. This is not done intentionally in master tournaments but arises naturally from the soundness of their play. The idea of beauty in chess leading to or following from effectiveness has even been applied to computer chess heuristics where it outperformed regular heuristics in certain tests (Walls, 1997).

Levitt and Friedgood add to our list of aesthetic principles the concept of geometry on the chessboard. Unlike the other principles, there is nothing inherently sound about geometry on the board but it is certainly one of the things we would first notice about a chess position. What is meant here by geometry is when the pieces on the board are arranged in such a way so as to form recognizable shapes (e.g., squares, triangles, rectangles, alphabets). Obviously such things are very rare especially in OTB games but simpler geometric shapes like 3 or 4 pieces in a single row, column or diagonal are equally noticeable and geometric in nature. Detailed specifics aside that are about all there is in common about aesthetics in chess as both a game and an art. In the next section, this common ground is charted and its importance explained. Before that however, the following two chess positions in Figure 1 illustrate how a combination of aesthetic principles can render one position clearly more beautiful than another.



(a)

1. Qe6+ Kh8 2. Nf7+ Kg8 3. Nh6+ Kh8 4. Qg8+ Rxg8 5. Nf7++



(b)

1. Ra4+ Kg5 2. Rb5+ Kf6 3. Ra6+ Ke7 4. Rb7+ Ke8 5. Ra8++

(Figure 1)

Both positions (a) and (b) are forced mates in 5 moves. Neither are in any 'composed' fashion but instead come from what could easily arise in a real game. In (a), white performs what is known as a 'smothered' mate by sacrificing his queen (despite already being a rook down) so the black king is cornered by his own pieces. All the while white forsakes the 'obvious' capturing of the bishop on c6 or queen on g5 in favour of checkmating the king. The final position is breathtaking. Black would probably not have seen it coming so easily.

However in figure (b), we also have a forced checkmate in 5 moves. This one unfortunately holds no surprise and black would probably resign immediately. White is significantly ahead in material and his rooks simply force the enemy king back one rank at a time until there is nowhere else left to go. Any chess player worth his salt would consider (a) more beautiful than (b) because of the aesthetic principles present namely winning with less material (paradox), violation of heuristics, sacrifice and execution of themes (smothered mate, fork, double check). Position (b) coincidentally has none of these things. Although it might be considered an extreme example, it should be noted that there are also more beautiful positions in chess than (a) and those considered even less appealing than (b). The distinction may not be linear, but nevertheless it is there.

3. Aesthetic of Chess in General

The previous two sections explored the idea of aesthetics in chess and how it applies to both the world of chess composition and regular over-the-board games. With the exception of certain problem composition conventions, everything that is deemed beautiful in OTB games, is also considered beautiful in problems. The items listed below are the common ground of aesthetics in chess as a whole and which applies to both domains.

1. achievement
2. violation of heuristics (paradox, sacrifice etc.)
3. use of all of the piece's power
4. use of the weakest piece possible
5. economy
6. originality
7. employment of chess themes
8. geometry

Looking closely at both problem conventions and aesthetics (brilliance) in OTB games, we can see that all these principles apply to both domains. Rather than taking problem conventions and trying to apply all of them to regular games which is impossible, the correct approach is taking the recognized aesthetic principles from regular games and letting them overlap with the problem conventions where possible. This can be done quite easily for none of these principles really go against the rules of problem composition. One of the benefits of this overlap is that we now have something tangible to work with when

evaluating aesthetics in chess problems. Previously, it was based purely on taste or subjective assessment of conventions (e.g. effect of bad duals, preferred themes) that in truth have little to do with beauty in chess holistically.

This does not mean that aesthetics in chess composition is now somehow limited to these principles. It only means that a certain level of objectivity with regard to aesthetics can be obtained by relying on these principles, and not just for chess composition but also when it comes to appreciating brilliance in OTB games. When speaking of aesthetics in chess (without being specific about problems or regular games), these principles are the most reliable because people tend to unequivocally conflate, often to a mystical degree, what they think synergitically emerges from problem conventions with the general concept of 'beauty' in chess.

Most chess problems can be recognized as compositions by experienced players and composers. However, once they are convinced of this their idea of what constitues beauty automatically falls back on the dictates of problem conventions. For example, if a straightforward checkmate (without much complexity and using the castling move in its solution) was 'composed', it would most likely be deemed 'not beautiful' because it did not obey or went against certain problem conventions when in fact, it could easily have been called, 'brilliant' in a real game. The irony is that regardless of being a composition or occuring in a real game, they are exactly the same thing, i.e., chess but viewed as beautiful only if seen through a particular lens. Fortunately, many people who do not adhere religiously to either camp will be able to recognize this beauty for its own sake and perhaps get some enjoyment out of it.

It is because of this enjoyment of chess that most people including experts, continue to play (Kasparov, 1987) and even devote their life to it. This fact has recently piqued the interest of computer scientists looking for something new to explore in the domain of chess (Iqbal2, 2006) given that machines can already quite effectively outplay humans but cannot for the life of them, appreciate or recognize beauty in the game as we do. Research into such things requires the kind of clear definition of aesthetics like has just been presented. Otherwise, the closest we have come to conquering this facet of the game is through automatic problem composition (Schlosser , 1988), (Watanabe, 2000), (Fainshtein, 2006) which uses heuristics that have very little to do with what is inherently beautiful about chess itself. For the most part, they rely on a few quantifiable chess conventions and arbitrary values attributed to specific themes by master players. They also admit to being unable to quantify the aspect of beauty in chess problems.

Based on the arguments presented thus far, the following diagram (Figure 2) illustrates the concept of beauty in chess in a manner that is supported by research and chess literature. It also represents principles (provided earlier) that are generally amenable to scientific investigation with regard to aesthetics in chess.

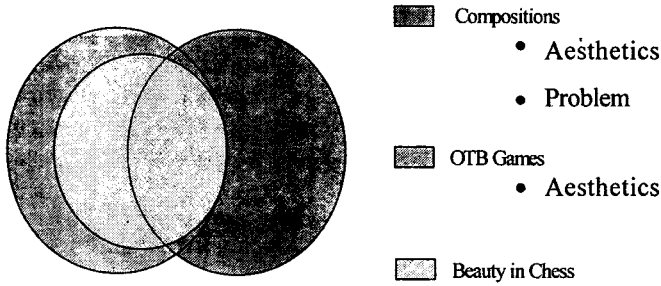


Figure 2: Aesthetic perception in chess

We can see from the diagram that compositions are usually perceived by humans from the standpoint of aesthetics and problem conventions. Often, composers and those who enjoy chess problems find the two difficult to tell apart. OTB games on the other hand do not particularly feature problem conventions even though some of them might exist as heuristics of sound play. However, aesthetics in OTB games is more easily recognized and forms much of the basis used to determine brilliancy. Beauty in chess as a whole therefore includes the bulk of what we perceive as aesthetic in regular games but only part of aesthetic perception in compositions. Usually this means the part that excludes conventions unique to problems.

The benefit of this compartmentalization is that we now have something tangible to work with when addressing the concept of beauty in chess without making the usual mistake of conflating it with problem conventions or personal taste. This is important because many people refer to beauty in chess as if it was something clearly defined when in truth they are probably referring to the former or the latter and this in turn does not translate to anything of value since it is inaccurate or utterly ambiguous. Fortunately, beauty in chess can indeed be defined to a reasonable degree and since the rules are the same be it in composition or regular games, it must apply to both in a way that is not necessarily adherent to problem conventions or personal taste but rather based on the idea of achievement and sound play. This is not to say that there is no room for personal taste in the aesthetic appreciation of chess but only that such definition is not tangible enough and therefore not helpful to research in the area.

4. Conclusion

Beauty or aesthetics in chess is a recognized and acknowledged concept in the game. However, no formal definition of beauty is given and therefore it often falls back onto the conventions of problem composition where aesthetics is commonly referred to. Even so, the fact remains that conventions themselves are not necessarily aesthetic because

few actually apply to real chess games where aesthetics is also recognized as brilliancy. Additionally, research has shown that there are principles of aesthetics that are not limited to compositions but apply to chess in general. Over the decades, master players have also identified similar principles of beauty based on their experience in regular games and problem composition. This leads to a much clearer idea of aesthetics in chess as something not native to either problems or regular games but applicable to the game as a whole. It also makes amenable to scientific research an interesting facet of the game which computers currently have no grasp of. While the prospects of this are certainly intriguing, it should be noted that such principles do not conclusively define beauty in chess and can only serve as the basis for aesthetic models that would be of benefit to humans not only in terms of aesthetic appreciation but also in improving game playing heuristics, problem composition algorithms and artificial intelligence in general.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Mark A. Cheetham, *Kant, Art, and Art History: Moments of Discipline*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 222.

Immanuel Kant's influence on almost all the branches of speculation that structure the history of Western philosophy during his time and later in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is simply picturesque. His approach to transcendental aesthetic judgment is still a vast source of critical explorations and elaborations. His contributions to the reflections on the nature of aesthetic experience, aesthetic attitude and aesthetic symbolism are more than legendary. The present author, Mark Cheetham, explores yet another aspect of the Kantian contribution to the theories of art history, as exemplified in the works of Heinrich Wolfflin, Erwin Panofsky; and Clement Greenberg.

Cheetham notices that it is very difficult to discern any important effect of Kant's philosophy outside its own field, particularly in the field of visual arts. "The reception and influence of Kant's thought in art history and the visual arts conforms remarkably to what Derrida has described as the logic of *parergon*," i.e., "the whole analytic of aesthetic judgment forever assumes that one can distinguish rigorously between intrinsic and the extrinsic" an assumption that Derrida rejects as he rejects all other binary hierarchies. Derrida rejects Kant's notion that art is an ornament (extrinsic) in the structures of buildings. Cheetham does not hold that philosophy is necessary to literature, art or art history, as was Kant's philosophy in general for the Romantics, in an *a priori* fashion, but it has historically been the primary fulcrum around which these fields have turned and defined themselves. Disciplinary definition and change is not "the process by which something from outside penetrates and alters the inside of a community... when a community is provoked to change by something outside it, that something will already have been inside." Thus when philosophy effects art and art history, it is no more entering to it, it is already an organic part, a plasma of it, Cheetham argues.

Five decisive "moments" of Kant's reception in and influence on the visual arts and art history are traced by the author: The first moment is the circle of Carl Ludwig Fernow (1763-1808) who lived in Rome for a decade only, but circulating there Kant's ideas profusely promoting German classicism in Italy through John Winckelmann and Anton Mengs. This Fernow circle is the major channel to influence the German speaking artists in Rome. Cheetham traces an interesting heritage of intellectual association of Fernow with Schiller at the University of Jena, and also traces his zeal for politics that he shared with Kant's republicanism, his support for French revolution and Napoleon. In Fernow's opinion Kant's aesthetics of beauty and political ideas are indeed correlated. Thereafter, Kant's influence is felt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Panofsky and Greenberg invoked Kant's authority to develop their contextual rather than formal understanding of art. Panofsky's humanism was interlocked with the Kantian freedom of the judging subject. Panofsky's uses of Kantian concepts and nomenclature around cubism, and Greenberg's around formalism are committedly Kantian. Panofsky's claim that artistic perception is no more faced with a "thing-in-itself" than is the process of recognition is notably Kantian in spirit. Artist's free choice of perspective is analogous to Kant's *a priori* intuition of space itself. In the early years of twentieth century there were two Kantian streams—the neo-Kantian stream culminated in Cassirer and the radical division by Heidegger—the two philosophers debating publicly over the appropriate reception and use of Kant. Panofsky's preference to Cassirer had the important consequence that "the explicit problematic of historicality recedes' in Panofsky's art theory and art-historical writings. He prefers the historicality of Kant (Cassirer) to the interest in history, and by this preference he turns away from both Hegel and Heidegger for whom history as a problem was fundamental. (p. 71)

Another moment of Kant's influence is felt in Daniel-Henry Kahnweilu, the most important historian of Cubism representing the works of Braque, Gris and Picasso claiming that the new language of cubism has given an unprecedented freedom to painting—"instead of an analytical description, the painter can ... also create in this way a synthesis of the object, or in the words of Kant, put together the

various conceptions and comprehend their variety in our perception." (p. 78) In this regard Cheetham disputes Paul Crowther who denied any link between Kant and cubism. Similarly, Clement Greenberg's formalism is also notably Kantian.

In the chapters four and five Cheetham explores the Kantian influence in the postmodernist treatment of the "sublime," particularly by Derrida and Lyotard. "Derrida and Kant are obsessed with the borders and the legislation of conceptual boundaries. Both thinkers... employ the term 'sublime'—despite its putative boundlessness and uncontrollability... Derrida uses Kant's sublime in *The Truth in Painting* as a way to think about the authority that philosophical aesthetics and philosophy have had historically over the visual arts... Jean-Francois Lyotard claims, too, that it has been with the vehicle of the "sublime that aesthetics asserted its critical rights over art." (p. 102) Cheetham exemplifies the remarkable range of contemporary visualizations of the sublime in France as well as in other horizons of the Western world.

Tracing the impact of Kantian philosophy in the modern and postmodern art historical writings is an extremely fruitful scholarly venture that was due long since, and the way Mark Cheetham has tackled the issue exhibits the lot of insight and exercise not possible ordinarily unless one has both zeal and sincerity in probing into this serious field. Cheetham's book is the result of a sincere intellectual exercise that extends over a decade and a half. One can easily note the success of the author in correlating history and historical progress of philosophy with the study of art and art history, and can easily find out here a model for investigating other disciplines in their creative and critical moments of healthy and happy correlations.

Haun Saussy (ed.), *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, pp. 261.

The present anthology is a report on the state of the discipline of comparative literature as prepared by the editor in response to the invitation by the outgoing and incoming presidents of the American Comparative Literature Association, 2003. Unlike its predecessor, the precious ten-year report *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (1996), the present report is of a different design, unlike any conventional form of report, very much suitable to the anti-authoritarian formlessness of the unconventional states of intellectual activities in the present century in general, it presents some reflections by the forefront practitioner of comparative literature who have vitalized the current issues in the discipline such as post colonialism, art history, literary theory, violation of discipline, terrorism, gender politics and politics of culture that defy the 'death of the discipline' that the controversial comparativist Gayatri Spivak announced simultaneously. The volume is lively and enlivening with its profound interest and energy in enlarging the scope and horizons of comparative literature for the coming decade—Long live the Discipline!

Contributors to the volume include the editor himself and sixteen others that are organized into two parts: 1. The State of the Discipline, 2004 and 2. Responses the first part covers the editor himself, David Damrosch, Emily Apter, Richard Rorty, Dielal Kadir, David Ferris, Françoise Lionnet, Gail Finney, Steven Ungar, Caroline Eckhardt, Christopher Braider and Fedwa Malti-Douglas; the second part—Katie Trumpener, Caryl Emerson, Roland Greene, Linda Hutcheon, Zhang Longxi, Jonathan Culler and Marshall Brown.

Richard Rorty's essay "Looking Back at 'Literary Theory'" reflects the loss of disciplinary barrier among disciplines at the American universities beginning already in the 1970s referring to the academic positions he held himself—from professor of Philosophy at Princeton to professor of Comparative Literature at Stanford through professor of Humanities at Virginia. This loss of barrier, Rorty observes, marks the distinction of Comparative Literature in its very flexibility of disciplinarity that it was very much prone to since its foundations by literary scholars like René Wellek. Comparative Literature, since its birth, was not simply comparison among literatures of various nations, not the German "world literature," but a completely new mode of studying literature set upon the very foundation of interdisciplinarity, a mode that was debated Leavis and Wellek in the late 1930s. Literary study joined

hands with philosophy as early as that period, not in the flexible academic, positions of Rorty after half a century. Wellek's *History of Modern Criticism:* 1750-1950 reflects this interdisciplinarity of literary study on its critical path that can pick up any discipline relevant for appreciating and evaluating literary works—a mode founded by Aristotle the father of Western Literary Criticism. The medieval notion of humanities and its compartmentalization of knowledge was decompartmentalized during the postwar period, when the war broken European scholars gathered in the United States and found Comparative Literature that walked with its full vigor despite Lane Cooper's calling it "bogus." Against this background, it is not a surprise that the teachers and students of literature opted for Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida and Foucault during the 1970s. The growing interest in these authors was not due to their offering a new theory about the nature of literature—"... the unhappy term 'literary theory,'" writes Rorty, it deceived some hapless graduate students thinking that they could write a worthwhile article or book just by "applying theory" to a text. This belief generated a great mass of beauty readable amazingly boring articles and books." (65) Rorty is, however, relieved that the tradition of deconstructing texts is now as absolute as spotting Christ-figures or vagina-symbols. At the same time, Rorty is bared with the curricular inertia that compels the philosophy graduates comparing Kierkegard with Levinas, to know something about Gödels' results before they clear their Ph. D. dissertation.

Rorty is also unwilling to accept Haun Saussy's suggestion that literariness is central to comparative literature, an idea that Roman Jakobson and his colleagues of the Formalist group developed by following Husserl's eidetic meaning in the 1920s. Rorty observes that this search for literariness in literature is as misguiding as the search for conceptual clarity in philosophical texts. It seems Rorty is wise in pointing out the limitations of both "disciplines" and "interdisciplinarity" that often ignore some vital, if not foundational or essential, sense of "differences"—one can not compare just anything with any other thing—"The difference between Aurbach and Spivak is as great as the difference between Heidegger and Carnap," (67) although it is impossible to identify anything central to an academic phenomenon or discipline as it is to identify the "core" of a human self.

Jonathan Culler, on the other wing of the report, seeks for the differences in disciplines following the Saussurean semiological principles of differential identity—"Their most precise characteristic is to be what others are not." But Culler feels unhappy and uncomfortable about the broadening sphere of comparative literature deviating widely and wildly from its original function of studying the sources and influence "bringing together works where there seemed to be a direct link of transmission that subtended and served to justify comparison." But comparative literature in its wild adventures has lost its commercial feasibility—"though comparative literature has triumphed, and many others are comparativists now, the jobs are still in the national language and literature departments." One might do comparative literature, but without losing one's base in national literature, this interjection being only a commercial one without any logical ground. This commercial scepticism due to a severely uncontrolled indiscipline or multidisciplinarity in this discipline that has caused even the ironic announcement of suicide by a comparativist like Spivak, is not to be dispelled without a serious consideration. But, at the same time, commercial viability maybe of a pragmatic importance without telling upon the intellectual criterion of the broadening scenario of comparative literature, admitting the disadvantageous gap between Auerbach and Spivak.

The essays in the collection are so highly provocative that several other volumes might be written as notes on them. A reviewer's limitations only highlights the scope of the work under review. The essays by Damrosch, Greene and Apter focusing the issues of post colonialism and hyper cononicalism in today's comparative literature are definitely intoxicating. The geopoliticality of world literature has been attractively exhibited by Trumpener. Although Saussy has been himself the target of attack by some of the contributors, his method of stimulating ideas in them is nevertheless most innovative. Awaiting the adventure of comparative literature a decade ahead, the reviewer offers his sincere thanks to both the editors and contributors of the volume.

Mazhar Hussain and Robert Wilkinson (Eds.), *The Pursuit of Comparative Aesthetics: An Interface between East and West,* Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, pp. IX + 264.

The editors of the volume claim that aesthetics is a branch of philosophy, and, therefore comparative aesthetics is a branch of comparative or intercultural philosophical knowledge, and the present collection of essays on the topic is, to their knowledge, the first one to be published in the U.K.

Aesthetics is no more a branch of philosophy, having already asserted its independence as an interdisciplinary cultural discipline inviting and engaging scholars from several branches of knowledge such as literary theory and criticism, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, logic, metaphysics, physics, art history and from any other discipline that might be called for, as the point in question is justified very much by the very intellectual identities of the editors themselves—Mazhar belonging to the discipline of literature and Wilkinson to philosophy. In an age of globalization, where philosophy itself is identified as a branch of politics—"a cultural politics" by one of the most influential thinker of this branch such as Richard Rorty once a professor of Philosophy at the University of Virginia, now a Professor of Comparative Literature at Standard University, and conversely Christopher Norris who was a Professor of English Literature at the University of Wales (Cardiff) preferred to be a Professor of philosophy at the same university, there is no justification in calling aesthetics a branch of philosophy. However, aesthetics has extended over a much wider space than its identifiers thought of several centuries ago—still widening more and more its self-defined and self-determined atmosphere and environment.

The present volume has its noteworthy and timely appearance indeed. The rationale of the collection of essays apart, the introduction to the volume warrants the warm attention of aestheticians of both the Western and Eastern hemispheres. "By and large," the editors write, "the essays in this book presuppose that we can (moving eastward) usefully identify something that can meaningfully be called a European aesthetic tradition; an Indian tradition; a Chinese tradition; a Japanese tradition (and so forth) and the comparisons take as their starting points an element or elements within one or more of these traditions: for example, attitudes to natural beauty, beliefs about the nature and function of drama, and so on. These elements are then compared, usually within a language native to one of the cultures, concerned." (P. 1) All the thirteen essays published in the volume are reproduced from different sources written and published in different times spanning over a period of about the last four decades. Ramendra Sen's essay was published during the 1950s where the author correlated the *rasa* concept in dramatology of Bharata and in the medical treatises of Caraka (1st c. A.D.) and Susruta, correlating again the concept of *rasa* in these two different areas with that of Aristotle's *katharsis* (The Sanskrit equivalent *vi-recana*=purgation). Sen had meticulously dealt with this comparison differing from the galaxy of the Western Greek scholars regarding the homoeopathic interpretation of the concept of *katharsis* in the Greek writings. But Sen was unable to distinguish between the Aristotelian concept of *kathasis* and Bharata's concept of *rasa*, although both the concepts aim at explaining the experience of drama. Bharata's use of *rasa* is clearly a gustatory metaphor (literally "food") and its correlation with the medical concept that developed later than Bharata's treatise, appears far-fetched. Bharata rather draws upon the Upanishadic concept of the Absolute as *Rasa* (*raso vaisah*) which refers clearly to the sense of relish (*āśvādana*). Sen was also wrong to compare Aristotle's *Poetics* with Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* as texts of the same order, whereas the truth is that the former is a treatise on the literary aspect of the drama, and the latter's on its performing aspect.

The editors are undoubtedly accurate in stating that Coomaraswamy was the first Indian scholar to study Indian aesthetics in comparative perspectives and have traced the development of this discipline since then through the last century till now. But along with many other scholars they should have counted very eminent scholars such as Professor V.K. Chari whose contribution to this field remains substantially prolific, S.K. Saxena whose studies in Hindustani music and Kathak dance along the line of Neo-Kantian aesthetics remain monumental, particularly in the discipline of comparative aesthetics. Both Chari and Saxena are extremely perceptive and profoundly deep in their probe into the subjects they have undertaken for comparative analysis.

As it appears, the editors have been in a hurry to publish something on comparative aesthetics (East and West) with a mark of a U.K. publisher (as they have claimed) without paying necessary attention to the conformity, integrity and contemporaneity of such an important topic as they have handled—no need of only reproducing the essays already printed without any historical sequence, thematic coherence, or critical perspective. The loss of unity in this design of anthology is only too transparent to be illustrated.

Paul Gordon, *Tragedy after Nietzsche: Rapturous Super Abundance*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001, pp. 162.

Yuval Lurie, *Tracking the Meaning of Life: A Philosphical Journey*, Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006, pp. 337.

Both the books appeared almost simultaneously, the second one in its original Hebrew form in 2002, and relevantly, they need a simultaneous reading as the central theme they deal with is art and/as the meaning of life. To write a book on Nietzsche's theory of tragedy is risky indeed, because *The Birth of Tragedy* deceptively surpasses all attempts at explanation. The ambiguity of Nietzsche's critical vocabulary apart, this book written with youthful exuberance is a category by itself that needs only reading dispelling all deconstructions that simply distort it. The fact is only self-evident as it reappears in Gordon's work tries that best to represent what the author has experienced in reading Nietzsche's *BT*. If Terry Eagleton discovers a link between the pessimist origin of tragedy with an anti-democratic elitism, Gordon denies that Nietzsche's views on tragedy originates in pessimism. In explaining Nietzsche's coinage "Strong Pessimism" Gordon writes, "The Greeks' strong pessimism is not to be confused with the defeatist mentality of which examples may be found among virtually every generation of the modern world... Indeed strong pessimism is not really pessimism at all. The early Greeks' contempt for life is quite different; it arises, says Nietzsche, from a rapturous "feeling of superabundance," a Dionysiac intoxication in contrast to the Appollonian principle of individuation not available to the common man who is veiled under the Vedantic illusion (Māyā as referred to by Schopenhauer) and relishes the rapture in the terror of tragedy that exceeds the conventional limitations of life. Evidently, Nietzsche's language is highly rhetorical in the context, Gordon refers to, and it is futile to expect any Aristotelian precision in formulating a critical theory of the tragic rapture excepting the point that Apollonian experience is a philosophical wisdom whereas the Dionysian one is an intoxicating rapture that can be compared to the aesthetic experience of tragedy otherwise unavailable to a common man incapable of raising the veil of Māyā by metaphysical meditations. Roughly speaking, Nietzsche's ideas, influenced by Schopenhauer, tend toward an Indian *rasa* theory of dramatic experience that has nothing to do only with the experience of tragedy.

In Nietzsche's writing *BT*, there is a jumble of critical ideas without any precise framework that evades all attempts for systematization. Nietzsche's attribution of pessimism or strong pessimism (is there any weak pessimism?) to the Greeks is certainly anachronic. Nor have his ideas of tragedy any historical or critical link with the Greek genre appreciated by Aristotle altogether on a different ground. Pessimism does neither explain the nature of tragedy nor does it provide any necessary ground for the genre. It refers to a view of human existence that is fundamentally temporal, and therefore temporary, a view that provokes the ultimate futility of human life, meaninglessness, one might say, or even "absurd"—"*Time* and that perishability of all things," writes Schopenhauer, "existing in time that time itself brings about... Time is that by virtue of which everything becomes nothingness in our hands and loses all real value."

This sense of temporality, Schopenhauer's Buddhist counterpart of *kṣaṇikavāda* questions the meaning or value of human life, a question that has been put by a galaxy of creative writers including Tolstoy, Wittgenstein, Sartre and Camus, and answered variously. Yuval Lurie is not the only or the first author to deal with this question, but he has put up the matter more comprehensively palpable for the common readers as well as the specialized scholars.

Pessimism, as viewed by Nietzsche, does not cause the meaninglessness of life. He speaks of a "courageous pessimism" that makes life meaningful in paving "the way of 'myself', to my task"—the type of pessimism that he calls Dionysian, and it is not very difficult to understand the meaningfulness of his Dionysian pessimism. Apollonian view of life as Māyā or illusion makes the phenomenal life with its vicissitudes valuables. But the Dionysian view of life (and hence futility) encourages man to survive the Apollonian pessimism by experiencing the aesthetic rapture, destroying the limits imposed by the Apollonian *principle of individuation*. There is nothing transcendental in this rapture "which is brought home to us most intimately by the analogy of intoxication." Thus life itself is not meaningless, it is the view of life, the way of life that is either meaningful or meaningless. Almost along the similar line Albert Camus views life meaningfully. His Sisyphus-man's engagement in the monotonous lifting of the load to the top of the mountain that slips down the moment it reaches the peak symbolizes the absurdity or meaninglessness of life, but his heroism or meaningfulness of his action lies in his facing the absurdity of life courageously. Following Nietzsche's phrase courageous pessimism one might coin a phrase for Camus idea—courageous absurdity. Nietzsche and Camus thus share the common idea that life's temporality or impermanence, or life in itself is neither meaningful, nor meaningless. They do not search for a Platonic permanence nor for a Schopenhaueran "real value" for identifying the meaning of life. Neither pessimism, nor tragedy reveals the meaningfulness of life, rather, on the contrary, tragedy the predominant genre of Western literature uncovers the truth or meaning of human life that against all impermanence, all absurdity, all suffering and all monotony man is courageous enough for his will to live, for his struggle to survive.

The nineteenth-century writers like Dostoyvsky, Ibsen and Strindberg do not participate in any pessimism as such, although they all exhibit man's zest for life amidst the fire of suffering that explains the very nature of life; and this is the very seriousness of human action that, Aristotle observes, tragedy represents.

What is mentioned above might be considered as an existentialist deal with the nature of meaning of life. But viewed from the analysts' angle, the very quest for the meaning of life is itself meaningless—a wrong use of the metaphor of meaning—what kind of question is the question "What is the meaning of life? What is the meaning of meaning in the contest of human life? Philosophical, religious, linguistic, ethical, general or personal?" (p. 21) Tolstoy's answer to this question, as suggested in his character of Ivan Llych is more or less a correlation of Schopenhauer's fear for temporality with the Nietzschean/Dionysian rapture that relieves this fear. Lurie devotes the whole of the second part of his book to Wittgenstein who makes an attempt for answering the question philosophically, by logical, epistemic and ethical analysis of the limits of life. A reader finds this section of the book shedding a fresh light on the subject. For Sartre, in a different wing from his existentialist compatriots Nietzsche and Camus, there is no meaning of human life. It is the personal self-identity that explains the meaning of a personal life. So, there is no common meaning of life valid for all individuals. Lurie's analysis of the positions of Sartre and Camus with their critics are extremely informative in all their details and subtleties, offering keys for opening the treasury of ideas that perturbs the modern man and the academic disciplines.

Braja M. Mishra, *The Poetry of T.S. Eliot*, New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 2003. pp. 269.

Thomas Eliot has been one of the most attractive literary figures of the last century to cover the bibliography on modernist poetry, criticism and cultural theory. The present writer claims to have added to this bibliography by studying Eliot's poetry in the Indian context. Mishra summarizes in his preface: "Eliot's early poetry records the struggle between two contrary faces such as the self and Self. The middle makes his strong religious faith in trying to reconcile these contraries by submitting himself to God in whom all dialectics ends. Eliot's later poetry namely, *Four Quartets* achieves this reconciliation.. My analysis is primarily done in the context."

There seems to be some confusion in this summary, although it is clear that Mishra wants to project Eliot's quest for the meaning of life against the background of a spiritual sterility that the entire humanity suffered from during the Wars and their aftermath. Material prosperity fails to make human life a meaningful existence without a spiritual elevation, and this spiritual elevation is accomplished only by a reconciliation of the phenomenal self with the transcendental self (in the language of orthodox Indian philosophy—*jivātman* and *paramātman*). This reconciliation, as Mishra writes, is a religious reconciliation, i.e., submission/surrender to God in the second phase of his poetic career. Then in what way, in the later period or the third phase, what kind of reconciliation is achieved? Reconciliation is certainly a wrong word in this context. Dialectics or the tension, the crisis of human life is resolved. But in what way the religious resolution by submission to God is insufficient that warrants a different kind of resolution in the later period (third phase?) that produces the *Four Quartets*? The meaning is not clear. How to distinguish the religious experience from the spiritual one?

Now, coming to the "Indian context:" Eliot was certainly influenced by the Indian philosophical culture during his graduate days at Harvard where he studied two courses in primary Sanskrit including some popular Upaniṣads. His references to the Sanskrit traditions are only too strong to reject his intense association with both the orthodox and heterodox schools of thought, Hindu and Buddhist, to specify it. Kearns' observations are most healthy in the context, although it is futile to debate over the issue whether Eliot was a Hindu/Buddhist poet or a Christian poet. The debate makes obviously, no sense, and there is no justification in Moody's obsessed efforts in rejecting the Indianness of Eliot (1996- Chap-2). On the other hand, it is equally ridiculous to appreciate Sharma: "no modern English or Western man seems to have touched the Indian imagination as T.S. Eliot has done." What gain on either or both sides? Is Eliot great because he touched the Indian imagination, or is Indian imagination great because Eliot has touched it? But the point of critical relevance is that there are sufficient references to the Indian ideas in Eliot's poetry that even a common reader would appreciate their impact upon the formation of the poet's reflections and imagination. This does not mean that request for spiritualism is there only in the Indian philosophical texts, but Eliot's clear reference to the Ganges, the voice of Prajāpati, and the *Gītā* in the crucial moments of his poetic events that provokes one rightly to appreciate Eliot in terms of the Indian philosophy, his drawing upon several other cultural sources apart Mishra does not claim that he is the first scholar to work in the area of Eliot-criticism that has traced Eliot's Indic legacy as he himself has produced a long list of his predecessors. Nevertheless, his work is not simply a rehash of the earlier critics. He is widely read, and is aware of the original sources that he has consulted in structuring his ideas on Eliot's poetry, although he does not specify the exact points on which his work is innovative in comparison to other scholars in the area, and what was the specific need for writing a book on the area already traveled by others, apart from his ambiguities in distinguishing between the religious and spiritual experiences, demarcating the vital lines that, he thinks, distinguish Eliot's final phase from the middle one. Besides, the author should not have forgotten to add an index to the book.

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